

ESSAYS IN MOSAIC.



"La netteté épargne le longueurs, et sert de preuve aux idées"

—VAUVENARGUES, Maximes, ccclxv

"Un grand écrivain élève nos âmes à son unisson, et son y réveille le goût latent du beau et du vrai"

—VAN DE WEYER, Opusc. Max 132

BY

THOMAS BALLANTYNE,

EDITOR OF SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THOMAS CARLYLE, ETC. ETC. ETC.



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1870.

TO

WILLIAM EDWARD FORSTER, M.P.,

THE UNDAUNTED ADVOCATE

OF A

RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION,

THE

FOLLOWING ATTEMPT TO DIFFUSE JUST IDEAS RESPECTING

THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING

TO THINK ACCURATELY,

AS THE

FOUNDATION OF ALL TRUE KNOWLEDGE AND WISE ACTION,

IS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THE Editor of the Bayard Series, in introducing this volume to the reader, wishes to say a few words respecting it. The Essays in Mosaic are, as it were, skeleton lay-sermons containing the best and most earnest and weighty sentences of the most thoughtful writers upon matters which concern us all, and which especially concern the welfare of the commonwealth, since, without having reflected deeply on such matters, no man or woman can be a good citizen. How far the compiler of these Essays is fitted for the very important task he has taken upon himself, may be judged by the following sentence from one who never flatters, who weighs every word he utters, and who in depth and earnestness, is second to none in this

"I have long recognised in Mr Ballantyne a real talent for excerpting significant passages from books, magazines, newspapers (that contain *any* such), and for presenting them in lucid arrangement, and in their most interesting and readable form.—Witness my hand. T. CARLYLE."

The aim of these excerpts, brought, like rays of light into one focus, is to put the reader, as Seneca phrases it, in possession of *himself*, and he who does this, the sage is careful to add, does a great thing. The method employed is to show the reader how to read, and how to think in such a way as shall tend most thoroughly to educate the memory, and to make the will subservient and obedient to the *Ego*. For if a man's memory be but a large sieve, through which all that is valuable passes, leaving but such unproductive and infertile lumps and stones as most would throw away; or if the will is restless and unable to be controlled, no amount of reading will do good. Of course, the art of reflection is more easily learned by one person than another. Whether men be all *equal* or not, is no question here: certainly they are not all the *same;* but whether a man have a large or small faculty of acquisition,

that faculty must be educated by habit until habit has become a second nature. For which purpose, it might be well for any young man, who would commence the most important business of self-culture in good time, to take one of these Essays as an exemplar, which, in the course of his reading, he might follow up, taking careful note of such analogies, resemblances, coincidences, or discrepancies as may strike his imagination or occur to his memory. By a steady persistence in this exercise he will, with a frequent reviewal of his notes, gradually acquire such habits of fruitful attention and reflection as will amply reward him.

And above all he must remember, that what he has to do is not to do many things badly, but one thing well; what is wanted in this world is not for a man to cover a large space, but to occupy a small one, and to do sufficiently; not to be acquainted with many writers, but to *know* one, and him thoroughly. Let us take as an instance our own Shakespeare—who confessedly says better, brighter, and wiser things than Aristotle, or Plato, or Socrates—if the two latter be not one—or Bacon; would it not be a wiser thing to study and know such a writer thoroughly than the thoughts of a score of much weaker and inferior men? To know

such a writer *will*, one must not only study but excerpt, and then study his extracts under different phases. This is a very old rule; it was the custom, as is stated by the nephew, of the elder Pliny. "*Liber legebatur: adnotabat excerptebatque. Nihil enim leget quod non excerperet. Dicere enim solebat, nullum esse librum tam malum ut non aliquâ parte prodest.*"

The assertion of Pliny anticipated the saying of Johnson, that there were few books so dull that you could not learn something from them, and will serve to modify the advice as to reading solely one book. M. A. Vinet, in his study of Pascal, asserts that the author of the "Provincial Letters" read only one book. He was what the ancients call *Homo unius libri*, and of course, as such, to be avoided for more reasons than one. But Pascal's book was like a Yorkshire pie; it might be only one, but it is a library in itself, and contains every kind of mental food, and quotations enough from various authors to furnish whole pages of them; need it be said that it was Montaigne. "He read only one book," said Vinet rather foolishly; "perhaps it might have been better if he had read nothing at all, for to read only one book is very often, however strong a man be, to put himself at the mercy

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I.

THE ART OF READING.

WE are now in want of an art to teach how books are to be read rather than to read them: such an art is practicable. ISAAC D'ISRAELI.

THE colleges, whilst they provide us with libraries, furnish no professors of books; and, I think, no chair is so much wanted. EMERSON.

ALL that a university or final highest school can do for us, is still but what the first school began doing—teach us to read. We learn to read in various languages, in various sciences; we learn the alphabet and letters of all manner of books. But the place where we are to get knowledge, even theoretic knowledge, is the books themselves. It depends on what we read, after all manner of professors have done their best for us. The true university of these days is a collection of books. CARLYLE'S *Lectures on Heroes.*

CONSIDER what you have in the smallest library: a company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be

picked out of all civilised countries, in a thousand years have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. The men themselves were hid and inaccessible, solitary, impatient of interruption, fenced in by etiquette: but the thought which they did not uncover to their bosom friend is here written out in transparent words to us, the strangers of another age.

Atlantic Monthly.

WHEN there is no recreation or business for thee abroad, thou m... then have a company of honest old fellows, in leathern jackets, in thy study, which may find thee excellent divertisement at home. FULLER.

FOR general improvement, a man should read whatever his immediate inclination prompts him to; though, to be sure, if a man has a science to learn, he must regularly and resolutely advance. What we read with inclination makes a stronger impression. If we read without inclination, half the mind is employed in fixing the inclination; so there is but half to be employed on what we read. DR JOHNSON.

IF you are in a strait—a very good indication as to choice—perhaps the best you could get is a book you have a great curiosity about. You are then in the readiest and best of all possible conditions to improve by that book. It is analogous to what doctors tell us about the physical health and appetite of the patient. You must learn to distinguish between false appetite and real. There is such a thing as a false appetite, which will lead a man into vagaries with regard to diet, will tempt him to eat spicy things which he should not eat at all, and would not but that it is loathsome, and for the moment a baseness of mind. A

man ought to inquire and find out what he really and truly has an appetite for; what suits his constitution; and that, doctors tell him, is the very thing he ought to have in general. And so with books.

T. CARLYLE'S *Installation Address as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University. April* 1866.

THERE is no culture like that of one who loves reading, and has only a few of the best books to read. Hugh Miller's writings show an extensive knowledge of English literature: but it was gathered slowly, through the course of years, from volumes acquired singly and at intervals—from his father's shipwrecked shelves, from patronising dominics, "sticket ministers," and travelling pedlars. Miscellaneous as this reading was, he seems to have liked that best which was best worth liking. The great classic writers of English literature were his chosen friends. He read them in long solitary evenings, and in evenings not solitary, but loud with conversation which he could not enjoy. He read them in the intervals of labour, straining his eyes over their pages by the light of bothy fires, and the long glow of northern summer nights. The enjoyment he had in them defended him from temptations, for the terrible strength of which over the labouring classes we sometimes, perhaps, make hardly enough allowance. The drinking vices of many callings are nearly connected with physical trials. Miller tells us that, under the influence of discomfort and fatigue, he had begun to yield, when, retiring one night to his hour of reading, he found the stately sentences of Bacon emptied of all their noble meaning. The resolution taken in that moment of conscious debasement was ever after kept. His opportunities of self-improvement

were never again thus voluntarily lost. Passing from the illustrious names

> "That fill
> The spacious times of great Elizabeth
> With sounds that echo still,"

he became familiar, in the same way, with most of the poets and novelists of the later stages of English literature—with Pope and Dryden, with Swift and Richardson, with Gray and Cowper, with Addison and Goldsmith. A retentive memory kept for him all he read; a fine natural taste determined his likings well, and a genial disposition made him live with those whose writings he admired. *Edinburgh Review.*

THE first step to be taken in self-improvement is, to try, as hard as the self-teacher can, to understand every word he reads, and, as a consequence of this, to put aside all books and all writers that he cannot understand. Such books burden and fill his mind with useless lumber. Such writers themselves, too, it may be added, do not always express clearly what they wish to convey, and therefore are obscure, hidden, wordy, and dry to the humble student. The duty of the self-educator is therefore to seize eagerly that which he does understand, and to nourish his mind with it, and to reject that which he cannot comprehend, or to defer it until he shall be more advanced, and able to master it. How to read a book is a much heavier task than many take it to be. From careless readers we have now many careless writers; but where the book is good, it deserves to be well treated. One may take it also as a fact, that the reader really takes up a book to use it, not to gallop or to hurry through it. It is well that he should know what he is about; that he should read and think over the title-page, ac-

quaint himself, if he can, with some little history of the author, some hint as to whether he is trustworthy or biassed. Then he should carefully read the preface, and master the idea that the author had when he wrote the book. He should then glance over the contents, look at the subdivisions and chapters, and finally read the book, if he choose to do so. This, which may seem a roundabout way to some, is in reality the shortest way. Some books, says Lord Bacon, are to be *tasted*, some to be read and digested. Let us presume that the work is of the common class, without any thought in it—a farrago of nonsense huddled together in haste, and made only for sale. The self-improver will save all his time by a preliminary study; oftentimes the title will tell him all that he wants to know; more often, the title, the preface, and contents will assure him that he has little to learn, and he will put aside the book and pass on to worthier food. For books are like men: sometimes their prefaces and addresses are by far the worthiest parts of them. As the reader progresses in his studies and gains in experience, he will find that there grows up to him almost an intuition, by which he can tell, in a very few pages at least, a bad, empty, and pretentious book, from that which will inform, teach, and render him wiser.

Essays on English Writers, by HAIN FRISWELL.

I DO not think that, in general, out of common history books, you will ever get into the real history of this country, or anything particular which it would beseem you to know. You may read very ingenious books, and very clever books, by men whom it would be the height of insolence in me to do other than express my respect for; but their position is essentially

sceptical. Man is unhappily in that condition that he will make only a temporary explanation of anything, and you will not be able, if you are like the man, to understand how this island came to be what it is. You will not find it recorded in books. You will find recorded in books a jumble of tumults, disastrous ineptitudes, and all that kind of thing. But to get what you want, you will have to look into side sources, and inquire in all directions.

CARLYLE'S *Installation Address.*

[SIR ROBERT WALPOLE'S remark touching the unveracity of history has been often quoted, but there is another observation of the old statesman, on a kindred topic, which is not so well known. In a conversation with an old friend, in the library at Houghton, he is reported to have said, "I wish I could take as much delight in reading as you; it would be the means of alleviating many tedious hours in my present retirement. But, to my misfortune, I derive no pleasure from such pursuits." On the other hand, an intense love of reading, such as Sir Egerton Brydges describes in the following passage from one of his autobiographical works, generally unfits a man for the active business of life.]

AN intense love of books from very childhood, and the pursuits for which they engender a flame in an imaginative mind, made me always a lover of retirement, and of the scenes where it could be most peacefully enjoyed. This was increased by so extraordinary a degree of native shyness as to take away all self-possession in society, and to make company often in the highest degree painful and irritating to me. The first eight years of my life, spent entirely in a country

mansion, placed secludedly on a wooded hill (though in a populous neighbourhood of gentry), confirmed this timidity of disposition and temper so strongly, that it has never since been conquered, though somewhat abated. For many years, in the early part of my life, it totally took away all power to make any way in the world, and threw me out of the paths of ambition, and even of the opportunity to make common acquaintance.

Recollections of Foreign Travel, by
SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOKISH people are continually apt to overrate the value of reading. There is a large order of minds—shrewd, healthy, intelligent minds—which must be stimulated by verbal and ocular demonstration, and which are quite closed to mere reading. And, on the other hand, there is a vast amount of reading which has no relation either to mental effort or to intellectual cultivation. A common consequence of reading for amusement is the love of sedentary habits, and the low physical tone thereby induced. If the ordinary run of novel-readers were to renounce the novel and the easy-chair in favour of the field and the brisk walk, they would, without doubt, find a sensible difference in both their bodily and mental condition at the year's end. Let us not be misunderstood. What we set our faces against is, not the use, but the abuse of books, an abuse which leads to superficial views of life, neglect of active duties, and a mental apathy only equalled by self-conceit. Even if books were all worth reading, it does not follow that the spare time devoted to them by the young and thoughtless would be well spent. But how few of the hundreds of books published annually are worth reading, and how rare is the faculty of

discernment! A real love of books is given to the few, not to the many. A wise book thoroughly understood is a mine of wealth throughout life. So strong, however, is the force of habit, and so powerful the influence of fashion, that indiscriminate—in other words, unprofitable—reading has become as common as bad pianoforte playing. Naturally, this sham culture tends to the depreciation of learning. It is so much easier to accept opinions ready-made than to be at the trouble of forming them, and so much pleasanter to read what is light and entertaining than what is dry and abstruse. Whether second-hand opinions and light and entertaining literature prove the most serviceable to the world in general, is quite another matter. In a word, then, books are inadequate teachers so long as we use no others. Self-development embraces the practical as well as the theoretic, and those who overrate the last at the expense of the first, run into an extreme the consequences of which are not easy to calculate.

Pall Mall Gazette.

WHY must men read so much? Desire for knowledge does not account for the propensity, for the information to be got out of a whole railway book-stall, for instance, is reducible to an amount surprisingly small, and easily obtained if it were plainly given. There are satisfactions in the mere act of reading. It discharges to a certain degree the conscience of responsibility, for, by a fiction of our self-esteem, we appropriate the sentiments of the writer. The sympathy that he excites in us for good, the anger stirred by what we disapprove, count for so many meritorious actions to our credit. We get into a world that we like better than the real one, and strut about in it clothed in the mantle of the

sophist whose "views" we have adopted. Meantime, our individual judgment is inert, or at the most used in criticism of the critic if in any way he offends our taste. The more charming his style and the more elevated his tone, the more injurious will be our thoughtless acceptance of his opinions. A naughty book does not drug the moral sense and evolve the lethargic conceit that is prevalent among educated persons half as much as the essays, reviews, and serious "articles" which abound. After a course of them, a man believes himself to have been actively engaged in furthering good and checking evil. With a satisfied heart and a sense of proprietorship, he reckons up the inventions and blessings of his age, for is he not one of those who assist in its advance—who prop the bases of society by his complete sympathy? If he happen to have lately studied some debate on pauperism—some story of a strike, he may be for a second depressed, but soon he remembers that "we" are sure, in the nature of things, to come straight sooner or latter, he recomposes his soul, runs his eye over another "subject," and then meditates on what he shall have for dinner, or how he shall amuse himself, the only topics that arouse in him the faculty of thought. As for judgment on any question outside the satisfaction of his civilised requirements, who among the leisurely ten thousand takes the trouble to exercise it? The average man in the unhappy possession of an income, unhampered by necessary duty, is much in the condition of the parrot in the Arabian tale. The poor bird declared that there had been thunder and lightning all night, because gravel had been shaken and looking-glasses had been flashed about its cage. Equally trustworthy would be the verdict of many incessant readers on the actual world outside their gilt cage.

Coloured reflections of facts have passed across their passive brains and entirely confused their faculties. Seriously, the mischief done to milliners, idle apprentices, and the like, by immoral and silly books, is a trifling misfortune in the commonwealth compared with the mental paralysis of the increasing crowd of moneyed loungers. There are many symptoms of the disease evident to any looker-on in society. Every one must notice the rareness of good talk, the increase of recklessness, the craving for excitement, the necessity of material luxuries that all indicate weakening of the will and decay of the judgment. "The fish decays first by the head," is a proverb among the fishermen of the Sea of Azoff. Is not the intellectual degeneration of the wealthy a less remediable and more alarming fact than what we call the ignorance of the working-man! *Ibid.*

THE root of the wrong appears to be, that people, unless profession or scientific interest influences them, go to books for something almost similar to what they find in social conversation. Reading tends to become only another kind of gossip. Everything is to be read, and everything only once; a book is no more a treasure to be kept and studied and known by heart, as the truly charming phrase has it, if deserving that intimacy. People expect no longer an art in writing—a genuine vocation in the author for his work, a real accuracy, a clear condensation of fact or fancy, a language suitable to the thought, and thoughts worthy of choice language. Almost all but first-rate writers (and this majority includes many who are first-rate) meet the fashion: their works are only to pass over drawing-room tables for the season, far indeed from that "possession for ever" which one of the books most justly so described was named.

by its author. The "Run and Read Library" only too accurately fits the popular feeling. It is here that the multitude of books tells injuriously. Really, the more books, the better possible selection for the readers; but each fills so little time in an age when every one reads, that it is natural to turn to the next on the table. I may notice that this summary process, this inability to read even novelties more than once, leads to a truly mean and miserably false judgment on many books once justly studied and enjoyed. Byron, it appears, is too shallow, Scott too popular of old, Wordsworth too dull for the Athenians of the moment. And yet, any one of these volumes, to those who read it in a more purpose-like and higher spirit, will give far truer pleasure than libraries only "tasted." We read at once too much and too little. *Multum, non multa.* I have tried to say in many words what the proverb says in three. Without a pedantic exclusion of lesser and lighter matters, let a man or a woman who wishes to claim her natural mental rights and position, read mainly the best books, and begin again when the series is ended. Life is not long; but the available list is briefer still. Putting aside the books which give special information or discuss points of theory, a few shelves would hold all the modern master-works—how few the ancient! Yet these are enough. For a good book not only puts the thoughts of its age in the sweetest and highest form, but includes, by a natural implication, the thousand lesser works contemporary. And these again we read with far more gain and amusement through familiarity with masterpieces. Knowledge of these supplies taste and judgment and standards for the pleasant work of comparison. It is books thus read which "give growth to youth and pleasure to age, delight at home, make the night go by.

and are friends for the road and the country." How modern the words seem! yet they tell that one thousand nine hundred years ago there were men who comprehended reading.

E. T. PALGRAVE, *in Macmillan's Magazine.*

[THE complaint of there being too many books written, is as old as the days of Solomon. Coming nearer to our own age, we find Lord Bacon calling attention to the same evil in his day, and pointing out the best remedy: "The great quantity of books maketh a show rather of superfluity than lack; which surcharge, nevertheless, is not to be remedied by making no more books, but by making more good books."]

[A PROPOSAL was lately made in the city of Philadelphia, that American newspapers should be used in public schools as a means of education, in place of those fragmentary collections of poems, dialogues, orations, &c., &c., which have hitherto been considered the most appropriate reading for Young America. It was urged in favour of this suggestion, that debates in Congress, editorial articles on state affairs, and on wars and their causes, are subjects upon which the youthful mind would exercise its powers much more profitably than upon beautiful orations or fanciful poetry. This startling nostrum in popular education has not been received with much favour in America, but we have no doubt that there are many persons in this country who will fancy that such a novelty would be an improvement in English schools. On the other hand, there is a growing belief among thoughtful persons in England as well as in America, that the excess of newspaper-reading which prevails at the present day, especially among the middle

and working classes, is one of the chief causes of the lack of that thoughtfulness without which practical wisdom is unattainable. In this respect the thoughtful reader of books and the unthinking devourer of newspapers differ widely from each other in mental tendencies as well as mental habits. The intellectual pabulum of the latter consists mainly of sensational exaggerated reports of what has been done and said within the last few days. The tendency of such reading, therefore, is to make men, women, and children, all of whom read the daily papers, overvalue the present, and forget or ignore the past. The difference between this class (who form an overwhelming majority of all who have acquired the habit of reading), and the comparatively few who seek to improve their minds by the study of well-chosen books, is forcibly stated in the following passage from an address of the Duke of Argyll to the members of the Glasgow Athenæum :—

"If you wish to be living always in the present—if you wish to have the din of its contentions always in your ears, and the flush of its fleeting interests always on your brow,—above all, if you wish to have your opinions ready-made for you, without the trouble of inquiry, and without the discipline of thought,—then, I say, come from your counting-house and spend the few hours of leisure which you may have in exhausting the columns of the daily press ; but if your ambition be a nobler one—if your aim be higher, you will find yourselves often passing from the door of the news-room into that of the library—from the present to the past—from the living to the dead—to commune with those thoughts which should have stood the test of time, and which have been raised to the shelves of the library by common consent of all men, because they do not contain mere

floating information, but instruction for all generations and for all time."]

We are not sure whether newspapers, as a whole, are not in one way nuisances, whether the habit of reading them every day, at all hours, is not a kind of intellectual dram-drinking, ultimately very injurious to intellectual digestion. As regards news, we are quite sure that a monthly paper, which gives the facts in series, and not in snippets,—the sort of newspaper which Messrs Grindlay and Messrs Smith & Elder used to send to India, before communication was so frequent,—is a far better education, creates more definite thought, develops both the historic and politic instinct in a far higher degree. Even as regards thoughts, we believe longer time for rumination would be advantageous, and are strongly inclined to sympathise with a friend who says he reads the *Spectator* on Wednesday, because he likes to have it previously "broken to him."

Spectator.





II.

THE ART OF THINKING.

WORK on the art of meditation has not yet been produced; yet such a work might prove of immense advantage to him who never happened to have more than one single idea.

ISAAC D'ISRAELI.

FOR every purpose, whether for action or speculation, I hold that quality to be most valuable which it is quite within our own power to acquire, and which nature, unassisted, never yet gave to any man—I mean a perfectly accurate habit of thought and expression. Such is, as far as I can see, one of the very rarest acquirements.

LORD STANLEY'S *Inaugural Address at Glasgow*, *April* 1, 1869.

THE rich are too indolent, the poor too weak, to bear the insupportable fatigue of thinking. COWPER.

'TIS the hardest thing in the world to be a good thinker, without being a good self-examiner.

SHAFTESBURY'S *Characteristics.*

I IMAGINE that thinking is the great *desideratum* of the present age; and the cause of whatever is done amiss, may justly be reckoned the general neglect of education in those who need it most—the people of fashion. What can be expected where those who have the most influence have the least sense, and those who are sure to be followed set the worst example?

BISHOP BERKELEY, 1732.

YOU cannot imagine what a difficult matter it is here at present [1742] to fix any man's attention, but for a moment, upon any abstract subject. Such is the general indolence of mind, that one flashy, lively thing, whether in thought or expression, though in the midst of trash, is more greedily swallowed than the most elegant piece of reasoning.

Correspondence of the RIGHT HON. JAMES OSWALD.

THE greatest part of mankind may be divided into two classes,—that of *shallow* thinkers, who fall short of the truth, and that of *abstruse* thinkers, who go beyond it. The latter class are by far the most uncommon, and, I may add, by far the most useful and valuable. They suggest hints, at least, and start difficulties which they want, perhaps, skill to pursue, but which may produce very fine discoveries, when viewed by men who have a more just view about thinking.

Political Discourses, by DAVID HUME, 1752.

THE indisposition, nay, the angry aversion to think, even in persons who are most willing to attend, and on the subjects to which they are giving studious attention —as political economy, Biblical theology, classical antiquities, and the like—is the fact that forces itself on my notice afresh every time I enter into the society of persons in the higher ranks. S. T. COLERIDGE, 1828.

The English people do not think for themselves. It is not that they could not, but that they will not. An Englishman thinks he thinks, and God bless him for it! for if it were otherwise, what would become of the mob of Englishmen who live with ease by thinking for him? If John Bull would only "put that and that together" in matters of opinion, as he does in matters of business, then would there be no mission, no call for any one to expose to his simple, unsuspicious mind, the profitable playfulness of his deceivers. The normal condition of John Bull is to have no opinions of his own. Instincts and fixed ideas he has, which, in the form of prejudices and accepted maxims, he takes for granted; but beneath the surface there is a great and rich mine unworked. No wonder this, if we reflect that, for upwards of two centuries, he has believed that he could live without thinking. He goes to rest, trusting to the watchman.

Frazer's Magazine, October 1850.

A THINKING man is the worst enemy the Prince of Darkness can have: every time such a one announces himself, I doubt not there runs a shudder through the nether empire; and new emissaries are trained, with new tactics, to, if possible, entrap him, and hoodwink and handcuff him. T. CARLYLE.

FOR stern, close thought, the mind must be schooled by habits of close application, and this is more rare than one would imagine; for, notwithstanding what is called application in our public schools, the *mind* is so little employed in it, that few men ever know how to isolate themselves from present objects enough to *think* really, and the habit is easily lost.

CAROLINE F. CORNWALLIS.

It is worthy of special observation, that the Scriptures are distinguished from all other writings pretending to inspiration, by the strong and frequent recommendation of knowledge and a spirit of inquiry. Without reflection, it is evident that neither the one can be acquired nor the other exercised.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

THE elevation of man is to be sought, or rather consists, first in force of thought exerted for the acquisition [illegible] Thought is the fundamental distinction of mind, and the great work of life. All that a man does outwardly is but the expression and completion of his inward thought. To work effectually, he must think clearly; to act nobly, he must think nobly. Intellectual force is a principal element of the soul's life, and should be proposed by every man as the principal end of his being. DR CHANNING.

THE test of real and vigorous thinking, the thinking which ascertains truths instead of dreaming dreams, is successful application to practice. Where that purpose does not exist, to give definiteness, precision, and intelligible meaning to thought, it generates nothing better than the mystical metaphysics of the Pythagoreans, or the Vedas. With respect to practical improvement, the case is still more evident. The character which improves human life is that which struggles with natural powers and tendencies, not that which gives way to them. The self-benefiting qualities are all on the side of the active and vigorous character. J. S. MILL.

WHATEVER merit my discourses have, must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr Johnson. I do not

mean to say that he contributed a single sentiment to them, but he qualified my mind to think justly. No man had, like him, the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking. SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

IN the breakfast conversation my father spoke of the rarity of meeting with young men who really took the trouble of *thinking* seriously—which, he said, was the point in which the English are behind the Germans; whereas, on the other hand, when once an Englishman has been induced to think, and to reason upon his thoughts, he also possesses the "ethical earnestness" to carry out his result into practice, just as surely and necessarily, he said, as that anything swallowed into the throat reaches the stomach and becomes nourishment; meanwhile, the German is too apt to stop short at the theory. *Life of* BARON BUNSEN.

[GOETHE found the same defect among his country-men, in the "young men of letters" of the last generation. According to his estimate, they were much inferior to Englishmen in that "ethical earnestness" of which Baron Bunsen speaks. "If it were possible," says Goethe, "to fashion the Germans after an English model, by imparting to them less philosophy and more energy, less theory and more practice, it would go a great way towards our salvation." William Humboldt, a philosopher and a statesman, who had studied human nature deeply, remarks, in his fifty-seventh year, that "it is difficult to obtain in early youth a perfect serenity of soul and independence of all outward things, and when obtained, it, unfortunately, too frequently becomes coldness and insensibility, which are worse than the greatest susceptibility." Contemplation, which is the highest exercise of thought, cannot be attained till mature age, as he

explains in the following passage from his correspondence.]

THE further a man advances in years the more he delights, if his soul have ever been capable of such a delight, in earnest contemplation, which, I may say without exaggeration, is now almost the only charm of my life—a charm which is increased by the nature of my pursuits, and which a thought, the suggestion of a thought, or even the feeling of a thought, ever renews. By the [illegible]ation of his mind a man becomes less attractive to others, more bound up in himself; and in this view I am far from unreservedly praising it: he rejects certain things, has an especial inclination for making his own views dominant, and easily retreats within himself, sometimes when not wishing to do so, if his opinions be not received; he feels, in fact, that he can only proceed on a certain track, and therefore desires that those who would accompany him should take precisely the same course. All this may have its inconveniences, but whatever is human must have them, and that contemplative life, which determines its own circle, and never goes beyond that circle, has and preserves its compensation in the very fact that it cannot be separated from it. HUMBOLDT'S *Letters to a Lady.*

If it were inquired what is to be regarded as the most appropriate intellectual occupation of man as man, what would be the answer? The statesman is engaged with political affairs; the soldier with military; the mathematician with the properties of numbers and magnitudes; the merchant with commercial concerns, &c.; but in what are all and each of these employed? Evidently in reasoning.

WHATELEY'S *Elements of Rhetoric.*

THE mental and moral advancement that distinguishes youth and manhood consists in the gradual (or partial) substitution of a rational and real for a fortuitous law of suggestion; or, in other words, of a voluntary, instead of an involuntary series of thoughts. A vigorous and mature mind is one in which the real relations of things, and not their accidental connexions, bring them forward and determine either their continuance as objects of thought, or their speedy dismissal.

ISAAC TAYLOR'S *Physical Theory of Another Life.*

I HAVE often noticed the process in my mind, when, in the outset of a journey or day, I have set myself to observe whatever should fall within my sphere. For some time at first I can do no more than take an account of bare facts; as, there is a house, there a man, there a tree, such a speech uttered, such an incident happens, &c., &c. After some time, however, a larger enginery begins to work; I feel more than a simple perception of objects; they become environed with an atmosphere, and shed forth an emanation. They come accompanied with trains of images, moral analogies, and a wide diffused, vitalised, and indefinable kind of sentimentalism. Generally, if one can compel the mind to the labour of the first part of the process, the interesting sequel will soon follow. After one has passed a few hours in this element of revelation, which presents this world like a new vision all around, one is ashamed of so many hundred walks and days which have been vacant of observation and reflection.

Life and Correspondence of JOHN FOSTER.

MAN, being the only creature here below designed for a social life, has two faculties to distinguish him from other creatures—thinking and speaking; the one

to fit him for the society of others, and the other to qualify him also for his own. As to the latter of these faculties, there is no fear of its gathering rust for want of use. We are rather apt to speak too much; and the most reserved have reason to pray with the psalmist—"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips." But the former is that which generally lies fallow and neglected, as may be guessed from the intemperate use of the other. There are few, indeed, that are capable of thinking to any great purpose; but among those that are, there are fewer that exercise this excellent talent. And for aught I know, however strange it may seem, among the ingenious and well-educated there are as few thinkers as among the herd of the vulgar and illiterate. For either they live a popular life; and then, what with business, pleasures, company, visits, and a world of other impertinencies, there is scarce room for reflection. Or else they live retired, and then, either they doze away their time in drowsiness and brown study; or, if brisk and active, they lay themselves wholly out in devouring books and making commonplaces, and scarce entertain their solitude with a meditation in a moon.

JOHN NORRIS, *of Bemerton.*

READING furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge: it is thinking that makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment. There are, indeed, in some writers, visible instances of deep thought, close and acute reasoning, and ideas well pursued. The light these would give would be of great use if their

readers would imitate them: all the rest are but particulars fit to be turned into knowledge; but that can be done only by our own meditation and examining the reach, force, and coherence of what is said; and then, as far as we see the connexion of ideas, so far is it ours; without that, it is so much loose matter floating in our brain.
LOCKE.

THERE are many persons who appear to think little; or whose manner of thinking is always inaccurate and confused, although their understandings are naturally strong. This commonly results from the want of that early discipline which would have given them the power to direct the course of their thoughts: the notions which fill their minds have never been set in order: they have not acquired the power of attending separately to single ideas, or of distinguishing clearly one from another. The greater effort they make to think, the more confusion there seems to be among their ideas; hence it happens that they are soon discouraged, and are willing to receive all their opinions from other men.
Elements of Thought, by ISAAC TAYLOR.

GIVE a boy a subject, and tell him to think upon it; you might as well tell him to create it out of nothing. Either he will not understand you, or if he should, he will not be a whit the better able to do your direction. Return to him in an hour's time, and you will find him sitting there addling his head, his paper covered, not with rich inventions—alas! what fairy could have found them for him?—but with scratches, and blotches, and ink-puddles, signifying, by no obscure type, the coagulation and stagnation of his thoughts. But tell him to do an easier thing—show him a much simpler, and therefore, for his boyish capacity, a much better method

—that is, to insure *attention*, as in most cases he will, by the *intention* of his breath—breathing each sentence through fully and freely, and yet gently, from its commencement to its close—fully, I say, though, of course, inarticulately—pausing there for a moment, and anon a fresh start. Tell him withal from time to time to raise his eyes from his book, and ponder in the balance of his mind the sentence that he may have finished. Tell him all this, and assure yourself that he does it, and you may be certain that he has made the first step towards that capital and most godlike faculty, the faculty of meditation. For myself I tried these experiments but too seldom—strange to say—for I never tried them but I found and felt the good effects of them. They were the cork bladders that buoyed me up, and encouraged me to strike out as a swimmer in waters below my depth. They taught me to dwell upon and consider the sentences of other writers—the ideas of other men; and this was only one step short of thought itself—of the faculty, that is, of considering and arranging the ideas raised by one's self, in one's mind, by virtue of memory or imagination, and by an independent act of will, not by the suggestion of books, or any other things or persons.

Self-Formation.





III.

THE ART OF CONVERSATION.


A MAN who knows men can talk well on politics, trade, law, war, religion. For everywhere men are led in the same manner. EMERSON.

THE perfection of conversation is, not to play a regular sonata, but, like the Æolian harp, to await the inspiration of the passing breeze. BURKE.

THE first ingredient in conversation is truth, the next good sense, the third good humour, and the fourth wit. SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

CONVERSATION is an exercise very dangerous to the understanding when practised in any large measure as an art or amusement. TAYLOR'S *Notes from Books.*

IT is when you come close to a man in conversation that you discover what his real abilities are. To make a speech in a public assembly is a knack.

DR JOHNSON.

I THINK the art of conversation may be learned by any one who possesses the fund to draw upon, for you

see all who are particularly desirous of being good company learn it. Military men who like invitations to dinner, and diplomatic men who *must* make themselves agreeable, commonly converse agreeably; but the great mass of Englishmen do not think the *art* worth studying, and speak only to vent their own thoughts, or, if they have none of these, to avoid silence, without any regard to what effect it will have on their hearers.

Letters of CAROLINE F. CORNWALLIS.

MRS THRALE mentioned a gentleman who had acquired a fortune of four thousand pounds a year in trade, but was absolutely miserable because he could not talk in company; so miserable that he was compelled to lament his situation in the street to ——, whom he hates, and who, he knows, despises him. "I am a most unhappy man," said he. "I am invited to conversations, but, alas! I have no conversation."

Johnson.—Man commonly cannot be successful in different ways. This gentleman has spent in getting four thousand pounds a year the time in which he might have learned to talk, and now he cannot talk.

BOSWELL'S *Johnson.*

ONE would think that the larger the company is in which we are engaged, the greater variety of thoughts and subjects would be started into discourse; but instead of this, we find that conversation never is so much straitened and confined as in numerous assemblies.

ADDISON.

I FIND the law of *one to one* peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship. Do not mix waters too much. The best

mix as ill as good and bad. You shall have very useful and cheering discourse at several times with two several men, but let all three of you come together, and you shall not have one new and hearty word. Two may talk and one may hear, but three cannot take part in a conversation of the most sincere and searching sort. In good company there is never such discourse between two across the table as takes place when you leave them alone. EMERSON.

MY uncle, Dean Morly, said Grattan, was famous for the best little dinners and the best company in Dublin; but when made a bishop, he enlarged his table, and lost his fame—he had no more good company—and there was an end of his enjoyment. He had at first about four hundred pounds a year, and his little dinners were delightful. But he had an estate left him, and afterwards came to a bishoprick; he had lords and ladies to his table, people of fashion, foolish men, and foolish women; and there was an end of him and of us.
Recollections of SAMUEL ROGERS.

ONE could take down a book from a shelf ten times more wise and witty than almost any man's conversation. Bacon is wiser, Swift more humorous, than any person one is likely to meet with; but they cannot chime in with the exact frame of thought in which we happen to take them down from our shelves. Therein lies the luxury of conversation; and when a living speaker does not yield us that luxury, he becomes only a book on two legs. CAMPBELL.

THERE are people with whom half-an-hour's talk is like an invigorating bath of sunshine. In this there is an element of success. There is another successful

manner too—one which impresses every one with a sense of your power. If you have a manner at once gracious and powerful, you have everything that you can wish as an outward aid to success.

Cornhill Magazine.

"I HAVE been struck, in two instances, with the immense importance of obtaining *conversational predominance* in order to be of any use in any company exceeding the smallest number.

REV. JOHN FOSTER'S *Diary.*

[John Foster was deficient in that constitutional energy which is indispensable to any man who aims at "conversational predominance." He was also too profound in his observations for a mixed company. Dr Chalmers looked upon Robert Hall as "the greatest proficient as a converser" he had ever known. Foster, on the other hand, he described as of a higher order of intellect. "He fetches his thoughts from a deeper spring. He is no great talker, and writes slowly." Dr Johnson, who had studied the art of conversation with great success, so far as regarded the attainment of "conversational predominance," gives the four requisites which a man must possess if he wish to achieve that distinction: "There must, in the first place, be knowledge—there must be materials; in the second place, there must be a command of words; in the third place, there must be imagination to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in; and, in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind, and a resolution that is not to be overcome by failures." The last quality is an essential requisite; for want of it many people fail in conversation. Robert Hall possessed each of these requisites in a higher degree than John

Foster. In aristocratic circles, however, a man who aims at "conversational predominance" must remember what Northcote said about Dr Johnson's error on this point, and hide his light under a bushel.]

WHEN Dr Johnson was asked why he was not invited out to dine as Garrick was, he answered, as if it was a triumph to him, "Because great lords and ladies don't like to have their mouths stopped!" But who *does* like to have his mouth stopped? Did he, more than others? People like to be amused in general; but they did not give him the less credit for wisdom, and a capacity to instruct them by his writings. In like manner, it has been said that the King only sought one interview with Dr Johnson; whereas, if he had been a buffoon or a sycophant, he would have asked for more. No; there was nothing to complain of. It was a compliment paid by rank to letters, and once was enough. The King was more afraid of this interview than Dr Johnson was, and went to it as a schoolboy to his task. But he did not want to have this trial repeated every day; nor was it necessary. The very jealousy of his self-love marked his respect; and if he had thought less of Dr Johnson, he would have been more willing to risk the encounter. They had each their place to fill, and would best preserve their self-respect, and perhaps their respect for each other, by remaining in their proper sphere. So they made an outcry about the Prince leaving Sheridan to die in absolute want. He had left him long before. Was he to send every day to know if he was dying? These things cannot be helped without exacting too much of human nature.

NORTHCOTE'S *Conversations.*

THE Queen [Charlotte] complained to Mrs Delany that she could seldom or never get any good conversation, as she not only always had to start the subjects, but generally had to support them entirely. Nothing she so much loves as conversation, and nothing she finds so hard to get. *Diary of* MADAME D'ARBLAY.

BONAPARTE, after he became Emperor, was fond of talking with men of talent, for he felt his own powers, and liked to show them off. He wished every one with whom he conversed to speak out freely, and not to be restrained by any feeling of respect towards him. In 1802, when he became First Consul, he used frequently to spend whole nights in discoursing with Talma on tragic acting. *New Monthly Magazine.*

THE Prince of Wales, when a young man, met Northcote, and was much pleased with his conversation. "What do you know of His Royal Highness?" inquired Sir Joshua Reynolds. "Nothing," answered Northcote. "Nothing, sir! why, he says he knows you very well." "Pooh!" said Northcote, "that is only his brag." The President smiled, and muttered—"Bravely said! bravely said!" HAZLITT'S *Conversations with Northcote.*

CONVERSATION is at a low ebb in this country at present. The higher belles-lettres of an age are admitted to be exponents of its manners, and we find the complaint made by Mr Disraeli, and testified to by Mr Thackeray. How small a part is played by conversation in our best novels! How rare is an elegant and familiar conversational style in our contemporary literature, which, in that respect, is far behind the literature of the time of Queen Anne! Who really converses at a conversazione? and has not Mr Carlyle suggested that

each lion should have a label on him, like a decanter, that you might learn his name, and ascertain those pretensions which will certainly not be manifested by anything you hear from him? The action of the press is one great cause of this colloquial inferiority. Newspapers, novels, magazines, reviews, gather up the intellectual elements of our life, like so many electric machines, drawing electricity from the atmosphere into themselves. Everything is recorded and discussed in print, and subjects have lost their freshness long before friends have assembled for the evening. Music is more cultivated, though this is rather an effect than a cause —a desire to fill up a painful vacuity; dinners are late and large, and the "mahogany" is an extinct institution. For the social dulness of the majority of men of letters the author of "Coningsby" accounts with a fatal plausibility when he tells us that they hoard their best thoughts for their publishers. To this, however, there are striking exceptions, and it may be urged that some of them are shy. Still, taken altogether, the general converse which marked the old tavern life—

> "Those lyric feasts
> Made at the Sun,
> The Dog, the Triple Tun" (HERRICK)—

the life led in rare Ben's time, then in Steele's, afterwards in Boswell's—belongs to tradition and to the past. Here and there, among authors, there is a *diseur de bon-mots;* but he is talked of as an exception and a wonder, just as here and there, in high political circles, there is a conversationist of the old Mackintosh school, lettered, luminous, and long-memoried. But these are the remains of the last generation, and where are their rising successors? Where there is talk of a superior character, it appears to affect the epigrammatic form; and this is an

unhealthy sign. If there were no other objection, how rarely can it avoid the appearance of self-consciousness and effort, which is fatal to all elegance and ease! The epigrammatic is a valuable element, but should never predominate; since good conversation flows from a happy union of all the powers. To approximate to this, a certain amount of painstaking is necessary; and though artifice is detestable, we must submit that talk may be as legitimately made a subject of care and thought as any other part of a man's humanity, and that it is ridiculous to send your mind abroad in a state of slovenliness while you bestow on your body the most refined care.

JAMES HANNAY, *in the Quarterly Review.*

[ONE of the most celebrated conversation circles, during the early part of this century, was the one called "The King of Clubs," where Mackintosh, Sharp, Sydney Smith, Romilly, Rogers, Scarlett, Francis Horner, William Smythe, afterwards Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, and other Whigs of what we must now call the old school, were in the habit of meeting together. Like many other clubs of a similar kind, this one seems to have consisted of too many persons, each of whom was anxious to take his own share of the conversation, at least; one evil result of which is, that it engenders too much attention to smartness and point—to that "epigrammatic wit" of which Mr Hannay complains—especially if they are in the habit of meeting frequently. Francis Horner, who had no great liking for that kind of wit, gives a very good account of one of the meetings of this club. On the 20th April 1802, a few weeks after the peace of Amiens, he makes the following record of a dinner-party of the club at Romilly's.]

"I DINED at Romilly's, and met a party composed of too many great materials to produce much effect: Bobus Smith, Scarlett, Mackintosh, Wilson, Whishaw, and Smythe. Though Mackintosh and Smith associate together so much, their line of conversation is different; and the former does injustice to his own talents for discursive and descriptive conversation when he forces them out of their way to an imitation of Smith's smartness, and point, and sarcasm. The conversation of Romilly appears to be quite different from either of these two; never indicating a desire to display, but flowing from the abundance of an enlightened, refined, and richly-informed understanding. The consequence of all this yesterday was, that no one had a full unrestrained course, and the conversation was made up of occasional efforts by all, in which each seemed fettered by the presence of the rest. All this, however, is only in comparison of the expectations I had raised; for the scene was quite new to me, and was unquestionably distinguished by great talent. If I were to describe the merit of each by a single word, I should say that Scarlett shows subtlety, Smith promptitude, Mackintosh copiousness; and Romilly refinement. I mention in Romilly this distinguishing character, both because I have seen in him a remarkable degree of softness and elegance, and because I was rather hurt by a want of sentimental delicacy in Mackintosh and Smith. Upon the whole, Bobus [brother of Sydney Smith] is altogether the man of despotic talent in conversation that he has always been described to me; he has something of despotic manner, too; his physiognomy, of which the forehead is admirable, indicates both."

Memoirs of FRANCIS HORNER.

[Horner, although younger than most of the men he was criticising, had paid more attention to the art of conversation than they seem to have done. In discussing them, however, he lets us see his own quiet but strong individuality of character. He was much taken with Romilly, because he found in the Genevese Whig a double of himself, making due allowance for differences of education. Horner was a universal favourite in the political world during the Regency, on account of his moral purity and strength of character. In literary parties, like the one at Romilly's, he could not be so much of a favourite. He had not that amount of promptitude in conversation which is indispensable for any one who wishes to take his part in such brisk encounters of intellect and wit.]

Dr Johnson.

Johnson's conversation is the perfection of the talk of a man of letters; and if—as we believe—the test of table-talk be its worthiness to take a place as literature after its immediate effect has been produced, where shall we look for its match? It has a style of its own, and cannot be imitated without absurdity. It is an intermediate something between literature and conversation, in which it is impossible to separate the share of the man of letters from the share of the man of the world. He sometimes said things which might have been transferred unaltered to his "Lives of the Poets," and he sometimes wrote things which only required the preliminary "Why, sir," as wings to send them flying through the dining-room of Sir Joshua, or the drawing-room at Streatham. But while in his study he was always more or less the scholar, in society he was often a man of the world; and his whole life was such

a union of "town and gown," as was perhaps never before exhibited by an individual. Not without difficulty do we realise the impression which his vivid, pithy talk made on his friends. We remember nothing which better illustrates it than the description, by Garrick, of the talk of Adam Smith: "What do you think, eh? *Flabby*, isn't it?" The word perfectly describes, by opposites, the qualities of Johnsonian conversation. It spoiled men for everything that was not both weighty and smart. It was at once gay and potent; its playfulness resembling the ricochetting of sixty-eight pounders, which bound like india-rubber balls, and yet batter down fortresses. Such talk could only come from a great, active, practical man. No mere scholar, no mere metaphysician, could ever have produced it. Johnson's conversation was, however, not suited to general society, but, with all its transcendent merits, had its limitations. It had not the winning, easy charm of Sir Walter Scott, but was stern and logical. It kept down all sorts of conversational excellence except its own, and gave rise afterwards to many inferior copies.

Essays from the Quarterly Review,
by JAMES HANNAY.

BURKE.

BURKE is an extraordinary man, his stream of talk is perpetual. Burke's talk is the ebullition of his mind; he does not talk from a desire of distinction, but because his mind is full. Burke is the *only man* whose common conversation corresponds with the general fame which he has in the world. Burke, sir, is such a man, that if you met him for the first time in the street, where you were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped

aside for shelter but for five minutes, he would talk to you in such a manner, that when you parted, you would say,—this *is* an extraordinary man. Now, you may be long enough with me without finding anything extraordinary. DR JOHNSON.

CHARLES JAMES FOX.

IN conversation, of which he partook only when the society was small and intimate, he was a model of every excellence, whether solid or gay, plain or refined—full of information, witty and playful betimes, never ill-natured for a moment; above all, never afraid of an argument, as so many eminent men are wont to be; but, on the contrary, courting discussion on all subjects, without much regard to their relative importance; as if reasoning were his natural element, in which his great faculties moved the most freely. An admirable judge, but himself addicted to reasoning upon general principles, the late Mr Dumont used to express surprise at the love of minute discussion of argumentation upon trifling subjects, which this great man often showed. But the cause was clear; argument he must have; and as his studies, except upon historical and classical points, had been extremely confined, when matters of a political or critical cast were not on the carpet, he took whatever ordinary matter came uppermost, and made it the subject of discussion. LORD BROUGHAM'S *Sketches of British Statesmen.*

MR WINDHAM.

IN my recollection, no person appears to have possessed the power of making conversation delightful as much as Mr Windham. His peculiar charm seems to me to have been that sort of gay openness which I should call the reverse of what the French term *morgue.* To

all, this must be agreeable, and it is peculiarly delightful to a young person who is conscious of her own inferiority to the person who condescends to put her perfectly at ease. *Diaries of a Lady of Quality.*

His spirits were, in advanced life, so gay, that he was always younger than the rest of his company: his relish of conversation was such, that, after lingering to the latest moment, he joined whatever party a sultry evening (or morning, as it might chance to prove) tempted to haunt the streets before retiring to rest. How often have we accompanied him to the door of his own mansion, and then been attended by him to our own, while the streets rang with the peals of his hearty merriment, or echoed the accents of his refined and universal wit! But his conversation, or grave, or gay, or argumentative, or discursive, whether sifting a difficult subject, or painting an interesting character, or pursuing a merely playful fancy, or lively to very drollery, or pensive and pathetic, or losing itself in the clouds of metaphysics, or vexed without paradox, or plain and homely, and all but commonplace, was that which, to be understood, must have been listened to; and while over the whole was flung a veil of unrent classical elegance, through no crevice, had there been any, would even an unkind or ill-conditioned sentiment have found entrance!

Brougham's *Historical Sketches of Statesmen.*

Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

Sheridan did not display his admirable powers in conversation till he had been warmed by wine. During the earlier part of dinner he was generally heavy and silent; and I have heard him, when invited to drink a glass of wine, reply, "No, thank you; I'll take a little small

beer." After dinner, when he had had a tolerable quantity of wine, he was brilliant indeed. But when he went on swallowing too much, he became downright stupid; and I once, after a dinner-party at the house of Edwards, the bookseller in Pall Mall, walked with him to Brookes's, when he had entirely lost the use of his speech.
ROGERS'S *Table-Talk.*

IN society I have met Sheridan frequently: he was superb! He had a sort of liking for me, and never attacked me, at least to my face, as he did everybody else —high names and wits, and orators, some of them poets also. I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Staël, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others (whose names, as friends, I set not down) of good fame and ability. I have met him in all places and parties—at Whitehall with the Melbournes, at the Marquis of Tavistock's, at Robin's the auctioneer's, at Sir Humphrey Davy's, at Sam Rogers's—in short, in most kinds of company, and always found him very convivial and delightful. I have seen Sheridan weep two or three times. It may be that he was maudlin; but this only renders it more impressive, for who would see—

"From Marlbro's eyes the tears of dótage flow,
And Swift expire a driveller and a show?"

Once I saw him cry at Robin's the auctioneer's, after a splendid dinner, full of great names and high spirits. I had the honour of sitting next to Sheridan. The occasion of his tears was some observation or other upon the subject of the sturdiness of the Whigs in resisting office, and keeping to their principles. Sheridan turned round: "Sir, it is easy for my Lord G., or Earl G., or Marquis B., or Lord H., with thousands upon thousands a year, some of it either *presently* derived, or *inherited* in sine-

cure or acquisitions from the public money, to boast of their patriotism, and keep aloof from temptation ; but they do not know from what temptation those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talents, and not unequal passions, and nevertheless knew not in the course of their lives what it was to have a shilling of their own." And in saying this he wept. . . . I have met George Colman occasionally, and thought him extremely pleasant and convivial. Sheridan's humour, or rather wit, was always saturnine, and sometimes savage ; he never laughed (at least that I saw, and I watched him), but Colman did. If I had to choose, and could not have both at a time, I should say, "Let me begin the evening with Sheridan, and finish it with Colman."

LORD BYRON, 1813.

LORD BYRON.

AFTER Byron had become the *rage*, I was frequently amused at the manœuvres of certain noble ladies to get acquainted with him by means of me : for instance, I would receive a note from Lady ——, requesting the pleasure of my company on a particular evening, with a postscript, "Pray, could you not contrive to bring Lord Byron with you?" Once, at a great party given by Lady Jersey, Mrs Sheridan ran up to me and said, "Do, as a favour, try if you can place Lord Byron beside me at supper." In those days Byron had no readiness of reply in conversation. If you happened to let fall any observation which offended him, he would say nothing at the time, but the offence would lie rankling in his mind : and perhaps a fortnight after, he would suddenly come out with some cutting remarks upon you, giving them as his deliberate opinions, the results of his experience of your character.

ROGERS'S *Table-Talk.*

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

TILL subdued by age and illness, his conversation was more brilliant and instructive than that of any human being I ever had the good fortune to be acquainted with. His memory (vast and prodigious as it was) he so managed as to make it a source of pleasure and instruction, rather than that dreadful engine of colloquial oppression into which it is sometimes erected. He remembered things, words, thoughts, dates, and everything that was wanted. His language was beautiful, and might have gone from the fireside to the press; but though his ideas were always clothed in beautiful language, the clothes were sometimes too big for the body, and common thoughts were dressed in better and larger apparel than they deserved. He certainly had this fault, but it was not of frequent commission. He had a method of putting things so mildly and interrogatively, that he always procured the readiest reception for his opinions. Addicted to reasoning in the company of able men, he had two valuable habits which are rarely met with in great reasoners—he never broke in upon his opponent, and always avoided strong and vehement assertions. SYDNEY SMITH.

MACKINTOSH has enlarged my prospects into the wide regions of moral speculation more than any other tutor I have ever had in the art of thinking. I cannot even except Dugald Stewart, to whom I once thought I owed more than I could ever receive from another. Had Mackintosh remained in England, I should have possessed, ten years hence, powers and views which now are beyond my reach. I never left his conversation but I felt a mixed consciousness, as it were, of inferiority and capability; and I have now and then

flattered myself with the feeling, as if it promised that I might make something of myself. I cannot think of all this without being melancholy.

FRANCIS HORNER, *February* 1804.

WORDSWORTH.

IN giving me an account of the sort of society he has in his neighbourhood in the country, and saying that he rarely went out to dinner, he gave a very intelligible picture of the sort of thing it must be when he *does* go out. "The conversation," he said, "may be called *catechetical;* for as they do me the honour to wish to know my opinions on the different subjects, they ask me questions, and I am induced to answer them at great length till I become quite tired." And so he does, I'll warrant him; nor is it possible, indeed, to edge in a word, at least in a *tête-à-tête*, till he does get tired. I was, however, very well pleased to be a listener.

MOORE'S *Diary*, *February* 1835.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH AND THOMAS CAMPBELL.

GOLDSMITH was said by Mr Garrick to "write like an angel, and talk like poor Poll." But what does that prove? Nothing more than this, that the player could not fathom the poet. A man who writes like an angel cannot always talk like poor Poll. That Goldsmith, in his peach-coloured coat, awed by a Johnson, bullied by a Boswell, talked very foolishly, I can well understand; but let any gentle reader of human brains and human heart have got Goldsmith all to himself over a bottle of Madeira, in Goldsmith's own lodging, talked to Goldsmith lovingly and reverentially about *The Traveller* and *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and sure I am that he would have gone away with the conviction that

there was something in the well-spring of so much genius more marvellous than its diamond-like spray—something in poor Oliver Goldsmith immeasurably greater than those faint and fragmentary expressions of the man which yet survive in the exquisite poem, in the incomparable novel. I remember being told by a personage who was both a very popular writer and a very brilliant converser, that the poet Campbell reminded him of Goldsmith—his conversation was so inferior to his fame. I could not deny it; for I had often met Campbell in general society, and his talk had disappointed me. Three days afterwards, Campbell asked me to come and sup with him *tête-à-tête*. I did so. I went at ten o'clock. I stayed till dawn; and all my recollections of the most sparkling talk I have ever heard in drawing-rooms afford nothing to equal the riotous affluence of wit, of humour, of fancy, of genius, that the great lyrist poured forth in his wondrous monologue. Monologue it was; he had it all to himself. If the whole be greater than a part, a whole man must be greater than that part of him which is found in a book.

Blackwood's Magazine.

S. T. Coleridge.

His conversation at all times required attention, because what he said was so individual and unexpected. But when he was dealing deeply with a question, the demand upon the intellect of the hearer was very great; not so much for any hardness of language, for his diction was always simple and easy; nor for the abstruseness of the thoughts, for they generally explained, or appeared to explain themselves; but pre-eminently on account of the seeming remoteness of his associations, and the exceeding subtlety of his transitional links. Upon this

point it is very happily, though, according to my observation, too generally, remarked by one (De Quincey) whose powers and opportunities of judging were so eminent, that the obliquity of his testimony in other respects is the more unpardonable: "Coleridge, to many people—and often I have heard the complaint—seemed to wander; and he seemed then to wander the most, when, in fact, his resistance to the wandering instinct was greatest—viz., when the compass and huge circuit by which his illustrations moved travelled farthest into remote regions before they began to revolve. Long before this coming round commenced, most people had lost him, and naturally enough supposed that he had lost himself. They continued to admire the separate beauty of the thoughts, but did not see their relations to the dominant theme. . . . However, I can assert, upon my long and intimate knowledge of Coleridge's mind, that logic the most severe was as inalienable from his modes of thinking as grammar from his language." True: his mind was a logic-vice; let him fasten it on the tiniest flourish of an error, he never slacked his hold till he had crushed it, body and tail, to dust. He was *always* ratiocinating in his own mind, and therefore sometimes seemed incoherent to the partial observer. HARTLEY NELSON COLERIDGE'S *Preface to "Coleridge's Table-Talk."*

May 10, 1827.—Irving and I went to Bedford Square. Mr and Mrs Montague took us out in their carriage to Highgate, where we spent three hours with the great Coleridge. He lives with Dr and Mrs Gillman on the same footing that Cowper did with the Unwins. His conversation, which flowed in a mighty unremitting stream, is most astonishing, but, I must confess, to me

still unintelligible. I caught occasional glimpses of what he would be at, but mainly he was very far out of all sight and all sympathy. I hold it, however, a great acquisition to have become acquainted with him. You know that Irving sits at his feet, and drinks in the inspiration of every syllable that falls from him. There is a secret, and, to me, as yet, unintelligible communion of spirit betwixt them, on the ground of a certain German mysticism and transcendental lake-poetry which I am not yet up to. Gordon says it is all unintelligible nonsense, and I am sure a plain Fife man, as uncle "Tammas," had he been alive, would have pronounced it the greatest *buff* he had ever heard in his life.

DR CHALMERS'S *Journal.*

[Returning from this interview, Dr Chalmers remarked to Mr Irving upon the obscurity of Mr Coleridge's utterances, and said that, for his part, he liked to see all sides of an idea before taking up with it. "Ha!" said Mr Irving, in reply, "you Scotchmen would handle an idea as a butcher handles an ox. For my part, I love to see an idea looming through the mist."—HANNA'S *Memoirs of Dr Chalmers.*]

COLERIDGE kept me on the stretch of attention and admiration from half-past three till twelve o'clock. On politics, metaphysics, and poetry, more especially on the Regency, Kant, and Shakespeare, he was astonishingly eloquent. But I cannot help remarking that, although he practises all sorts of delightful tricks, and shows admirable skill in riding his hobby, yet he may be easily unsaddled. I was surprised to find how one may obtain concessions which lead to gross inconsistencies. Though an incomparable declaimer and speech-maker, he has neither the readiness nor the acuteness required by a

colloquial disputant; so that, with a sense of inferiority which makes me humble in his presence, I do not feel in the least afraid of him.

Letter from HENRY CRABBE ROBINSON
to his Brother, 1810.

[In his "Reminiscences," written at a much later period, H. C. R. says: "This I wrote when I knew little of him; I used afterwards to compare him as a disputant to a serpent—easy to kill, if you assume the offensive; but if you let him attack, his bite is mortal. Some years after this, when I saw Madame de Staël in London, I asked her what she thought of him. She replied, "He is very great in monologue, but he has no idea of dialogue." Elsewhere, H. C. R. says, in a letter to Miss Wordsworth, in 1810, "Coleridge has more eloquence than any man I ever saw, except, perhaps, Curran, the Irish orator, who possesses in a very high degree the only excellence which Coleridge wants to be a perfect parlour orator—viz., short sentences. Coleridge cannot *converse*. He addresses himself *to* his hearers. At the same time, he is a much better listener than I expected. In that respect he differed very much from Madame de Stael, who was great in monologue," like Coleridge, but a most indifferent listener. Lady Blessington, in her "Conversations with Lord Byron," gives his opinion of the famous Frenchwoman on that head: "She declaimed to you, instead of conversing, never pausing except to take breath; if during that interval a rejoinder was put in, it was evident that she did not attend to it, as she resumed the thread of her discourse as though it had not been interrupted." Bentham, who had a great aversion to monologists of that sort, refused to give her an audience. In reply to her request, he sent to say

that he certainly had nothing to say to her, and he could not see the necessity of an interview for anything she had to say to him. She said to Dumont: "Tell Bentham I will see nobody till I have seen him." "Sorry for it," said Bentham, "for then she will not see anybody."]

JOHN STERLING.

IN any arena where eloquence and argument was the point, this man was calculated to have borne the bell from all competitors. In lucid, ingenious talk and logic, in all manner of brilliant utterance and tongue-fence, I have hardly known his fellow. So ready lay his store of knowledge round, so perfect was his ready utterance of the same,—in corruscating wit, in jocund drollery, in compact articulated clearness, or high poignant emphasis, as the case required,—he was a match for any man in argument before a crowd of men. One of the most supple-wristed, dexterous, graceful, and successful fencers in that kind. A man, as Mr Hare has said, "able to argue with four or five at once; could do the parrying all round, in a succession swift as light, and plant his hits wherever a chance offered.

CARLYLE'S *Life of Sterling.*

THOMAS CARLYLE.

ACCUSTOMED to the infinite wit and exuberant richness of his writings, his talk is still an amazement and a splendour scarcely to be faced with steady eyes. He does not converse—only harangues. It is the usual misfortune of such marked men (happily not one invariable or inevitable) that they cannot allow their minds room to breathe and show themselves in other atmosphere, and thus miss the refreshment and instruction which the greatest never cease to need from the

experience of the humblest. Carlyle allows no one a chance, but bears down all opposition, not only by his wit and onset of words resistless in their sharpness as so many bayonets, but by actual physical superiority, raising his voice and rushing on his opponent with a torrent of sound. This is not the least from unwillingness to allow freedom to others; on the contrary, no man would more enjoy a manly resistance to his thought; but it is the impulse of a mind accustomed to follow out its own impulse, as the hawk its prey, and which knows not how to stop in the chase. Carlyle, indeed, is arrogant and overbearing, but in his arrogance there is no littleness, no self-love; it is the heroic arrogance of some old Scandinavian conqueror—it is his nature and the untameable impulse that has given him power to crush the dragons. You do not love him, perhaps, nor revere—and perhaps, also, he would only laugh at you if you did—but you like him heartily, and like to see him the powerful smith, the Siegfried, melting all the old iron in his furnace till it glows to a sunset red, and burns you if you senselessly go too near. He seemed to be quite isolated, lonely as the desert, yet never was man more fitted to prize a man, could he find one to match his mood. He finds them, but only in the past. He sings rather than talks. He pours upon you a kind of satirical, heroical, critical poem, with regular cadences, and generally catching up near the beginning some singular epithet, which serves as a *refrain* when his song is full, or with which, as with a knitting needle, he catches up the stitches if he has chanced now and then to let fall a row. MARGARET FULLER.

THE tongue has the *sough* of Annandale—an echo of the Solway with its compliments to old Father Thames.

A keen, sharp, ringing voice, in the genuine Border key, but tranquil and sedate withal—neighbourly and frank, and always in unison with what is uttered. In his conversation—he sees the very thing he speaks of; it breathes and moves palpable to him, and hence his words form a picture. When you come from him, the impression is like having seen a great brilliant panorama; everything has been made visible and naked to your sight. But more and better far than that; you bear home with you an indelible feeling of *love* for the man—deep at the heart, long as life. No man has ever inspired more of this personal affection. Not to love Carlyle when you know him is something unnatural, as if one should say they did not love the breeze that fans their cheek, or the vine-tree which has refreshed them both with its leafy shade and its exuberant juices. He abounds, himself, in love and in good works. His life, not only as a "writer of books," but as a man amongst his fellows, has been a continued shower of benefits. The young men, more especially, to whom he has been the Good Samaritan, pouring oil upon their wounds, and binding up their bruised limbs, and putting them on the way of recovery of health and useful energy—the number of such can scarcely be told, and will never be known till the great day of accounts.

London Correspondent of the Dumfries Courier.

Dr Arnold.

He was fond of conversation on serious matters, and vehement in argument; fearless, too, in advancing his opinions—which, to say the truth, often startled us a good deal; but he was ingenuous and candid, and though the fearlessness with which, so young as he

was, he advanced his opinions, might have seemed to betoken presumption, yet the good temper with which he bore retort or rebuke, relieved him from that imputation. He was bold and warm, because so far as his knowledge went he saw very clearly, and he was an ardent lover of truth, but I never saw in him even then a grain of vanity or conceit. I have said that some of his opinions startled us a good deal; we were, indeed, for the most part Tories in Church and State, great respecters of things as they were, and not very tolerant of the disposition which he brought with him to question their wisdom. Many and long were the conflicts we had, and with unequal numbers. I think I have seen all the leaders of the common room engaged with him at once, with little order or consideration, as may be supposed, and not always with great scrupulosity as to the fairness of our arguments. This was attended by no loss of regard, and scarcely ever, or seldom, by even momentary loss of temper. We did not always convince him—perhaps we ought not always to have done so—yet in the end a considerable modification of his opinions was produced; in one of his letters to me, written at a much later period, he mentions this change. In truth, there were those among us calculated to produce an impression on his affectionate heart and ardent, ingenuous mind; and the rather, because the more we saw of him, and the more we battled with him, the more manifestly did we respect and love him. The feeling with which we argued gave additional power to our arguments over a disposition such as his; and thus he became attached to young men of the most different tastes and intellects, his love for each taking a different colour, more or less blended with respect, fondness, or even humour, according to these differences; and

in return they all uniting in respect and love for him.
JUSTICE COLERIDGE,
in Stanley's Life of Dr Arnold.

MR BUCKLE.

"I HAVE known most of the celebrated talkers of—I will not say how many years back—of the time, in a word, when Sydney Smith, rejoiced in his green, bright, old age, and Luttrell and Rogers and Tommy Moore were still capable of giving forth an occasional flash; and when the venerable Lord Brougham, and yet more venerable Lord Lyndhurst, delighted in friendly and brilliant sparring at dinner-tables whose hosts are now in their half-forgotten graves. I have known some brilliant talkers in Paris—Lamartine, and Dumas, and Cabarras, and brightest, or at least most constantly bright of all, the late Madame Emile de Girardin. I knew Douglas Jerrold; and I am still happy enough to claim acquaintance with certain men and women whose names, though well-known, it were, perhaps, invidious now to mention. But for inexhaustibility, versatility, memory, and self-confidence, I never met any to compete with Buckle. He could keep pace with any given number of interlocutors on any given number of subjects, from the abstrusest point on the abstrusest science to the lightest *jeu d'esprit*, and talk them all down, and be quite ready to start afresh. Among the hundred and one anecdotes with which he entertained us I may be permitted to give, say the hundred and first:—"Wordsworth," said Charles Lamb, "one day told me that he considered Shakespeare greatly overrated. 'There is an immensity of trick in all Shakespeare wrote,' he said, 'and people are taken in by it. I could have written as well as he did, if I had had

a mind.' So you see (proceeded Charles Lamb, quietly) it was only the *mind* that was wanting." We met Buckle on several subsequent occasions, and his talk and his spirits never flagged; the same untiring energy marked all he said and did; and thought, and fatigue, and oppression appeared to be things unknown to him.

Arabian Days and Nights, by MISS POWER.

HENRY CRABBE ROBINSON.

MR ROBINSON'S name is widely known as a capital talker. There is a saying that a man's strength is also his weakness, and there are not wanting jokes about his wanting to take all the conversation to himself. It is reported that one day at a breakfast-party at Sam Rogers's, the host said to those assembled, "Oh, if there is any one here who wishes to say anything, he had better say it at once, for Crabbe Robinson is coming." But there is no subject on which he more frequently reproaches himself, than with the habit of taking too large a share of the talk. When his strength was beginning to fail, his friend Edwin Field urged him in a letter to refrain from talking "more than two hours consecutively." He notes this in the Diary, and adds, "Is this satire? It does not offend me." Yet he was too candid not to acknowledge that conversation was the one thing in which, in his own estimation, he excelled. . . . It is not too much to say that, to the great majority of those who were in the habit of meeting him, his conversation was a real delight. The editor well remembers the secret pleasure with which he invariably saw him come into the room, and the feeling which the announcement of his death caused. There were veins in his conversation, from which more good was to be gained in a

pleasant hour after dinner, than from many a lengthened serious discourse.

Preface to the Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of HENRY CRABBE ROBINSON.

A HOLLAND HOUSE DINNER-PARTY.

LET us invite the reader to assist at a dinner at Holland House, in the height of the London and Parliamentary season, say a Saturday in June. It is scarcely seven—for the luxuries of the house are enhanced by a punctuality in the main object of the day, which yields to no dilatory guest of whatever pretension—and you are seated in an oblong room, rich in old gilding, opposite a deep recess, pierced by large old windows, through which the rich branches of trees, bathed in golden light, just admit the faint outline of the Surrey hills. Among the guests are some, perhaps, of the highest rank, always some of high political importance, about whom the interest of busy life gathers, intermixed with others eminent already in literature or art, or of that dawning promise which the hostess delights to discover, and the host to smile on. All are assembled for the purpose of enjoyment; the anxieties of the minister, the feverish struggles of the partisan, the silent toils of the artist or critic, are finished for the week; professional and literary jealousies are hushed; sickness, decrepitude, and death are silently voted shadows; and the brilliant assemblage is prepared to exercise, in the highest degree, the extraordinary privilege of mortals to live in the knowledge of mortality without its consciousness, and to people the present hour with delights, as if a man lived, and laughed, and enjoyed in this world for ever. Every appliance of physical luxury which the most delicate art can supply, attends on each; every faint

wish which luxury creates is anticipated; the noblest and most gracious countenance in the world smiles over the happiness it is diffusing, and redoubles it by cordial invitations and encouraging words, which set the humblest stranger at perfect ease. As the dinner merges into the dessert, and the sunset casts a richer glow on the branches, still, or lightly waving in the evening light, and on the scene within, the harmony of all sensations becomes more perfect; a delighted and delighting chuckle invites attention to some joyous sally of the richest intellectual wit, reflected in the faces of all, even to the favourite page in green, who attends his mistress with duty like that of the antique world; the choicest wines are enhanced in their liberal but temperate use, by the vista opened in Lord Holland's tales of bacchanalian evenings at Brookes's with Fox and Sheridan, when potations deeper and more serious rewarded the statesman's toils, and shortened his days; until at length the serener pleasure of conversation, of the now carelessly scattered groups, is enjoyed in that old, long unrivalled library, in which Addison mused, and wrote, and drank, where every living grace attends, "and more than echoes talk along the walls." One happy peculiarity of these assemblies was, the number of persons in different stations and of various celebrity, who were gratified by seeing, still more in hearing and knowing each other; the statesman was relieved from care by association with the poet, of whom he had heard and partially read; and the poet was elevated by the courtesy which "bared the *great* heart" which "beats beneath a star;" and each felt, not rarely, the true dignity of the other, modestly expanding under the most benignant influences.

TALFOURD'S *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.*

Talking of Lady Holland's crowded dinners, and her bidding people constantly "to make room," Luttrell said, "It must certainly be *made*, for it does not *exist*." Dined at Lady Holland's. Found in the hall, as I was going in, a victim of *one* of her ways of making room, in the person of Gore, who was putting on his greatcoat to take his departure, having been sent away by my lady for want of room. Company, Lord Melbourne, Lords Erroll and Kinnaird (if I recollect right), Lord Dalmeny, and a good many more. So great was the "pressure from without," that Allen, after he had performed his carving part, retired to a small side-table to dine. All was very agreeable, however, and I have seldom seen Lord Melbourne in such good spirits. Rogers's theory is that the close packing of Lady Holland's dinners is one of the secrets of their conversableness and agreeableness; and perhaps he is right. Moore's *Diary*.

Some talk with Allen; during which I asked him whether he did not sometimes feel wearied by the sort of effort it must be to keep up conversation during these evenings; and he owned that it was frequently a most heavy task, and that if he had followed his own taste and wishes he would long since have given up that mode of life. For myself (as I believe I told him), that Holland House sort of existence, though by far the best specimen of its kind going, would appear to me, for any continuance, the most wearisome of all forms of slavery; and the best result I find of my occasional visits to town is the real relish with which I return to my quiet garden and study, where, in the mute society of my own thoughts and books, I am never either offended or wearied. *Ibid.*

Lord Holland never ventured to ask any one to dinner (not even me, whom he had known so long and so intimately), without previously consulting Lady Holland. Shortly before his death, I called at Holland House, and found only Lady Holland within. As I was coming out, I met Lord Holland, who said, "Well, do you return to dinner?" I answered, "No; I have not been invited." Perhaps this deference to Lady Holland was not to be regretted; for Lord Holland was so hospitable and good-natured, that, had he been left to himself, he would have had a crowd at his table daily.

Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers.

A Supper-Party at Charles Lamb's.

Now turn to No. 4 Inner Temple Lane, at ten o'clock, when the sedater part of the company are assembled, and the happier stragglers are dropping in from the play. Let it be any autumn or winter month, when the fire is blazing steadily, and the clean-swept hearth and whist-tables speak of the spirit of Mrs Battle, and serious looks require "the rigour of the game!" The furniture is old-fashioned and worn, the ceiling low, and not wholly unstained by traces of "the great plant," though now virtuously forborne; but the Hogarths, in narrow black frames, abounding in infinite thought, humour, and pathos, enrich the walls, and all things wear an air of comfort and hearty English welcome. Lamb himself, yet unrelaxed by the glass, is sitting with a sort of Quaker primness at the whist-table, the gentleness of his melancholy smile half lost in his intentness on the game; his partner, the author of "Political Justice" (the majestic expression of his large head not disturbed by disproportion of his diminutive stature), is regarding his hand with a philosophic but not a careless eye;

Captain Burney, only not venerable because so young in spirit, sits between them; and H. C. R. (Henry Crabbe Robinson), who alone now and then breaks the proper silence, to welcome some in-coming guest, is his happy partner—true winner in the game of life, whose leisure, achieved early, is devoted to his friends! At another table, just beyond the circle which extends from the fire, sits another four. The broad, burly, jovial bulk of John Lamb, the Ajax Telamon of the slender clerks of the old South Sea House, whom he sometimes introduces to the rooms of his younger brother, surprised to learn from them that he is growing famous, confronts the stately but courteous Alsager; while P., "his few hairs bristling" at gentle objurgation, watches his partner M. B. dealing with "soul more white" than the hands of which Lamb once said, "M., if dirt was trumps, what hands you would hold!" In one corner of the room you may see the pale, earnest countenance of Charles Lloyd, who is discoursing "of fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute" with Leigh Hunt; and, if you choose to listen, you will scarcely know which most to admire —the severe logic of the melancholy reasoner, or its graceful evasion by the tricksome fantasy of the joyous poet. Basil Montague, gentle enthusiast in the cause of humanity, which he has lived to see triumphant, is pouring into the outstretched ear of George Dyer some tale of legalised injustice, which the recipient is vainly trying to comprehend. Soon the room fills; in *slouches* Hazlitt from the theatre, where his stubborn anger for Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo has been softened by Miss Stephens's angelic notes, which might "chase anger, and grief, and fear, and sorrow, and pain, from mortal or immortal minds;" Kenney, with a tremulous pleasure, announces that there is a crowded house to the ninth,

representation of his new comedy, of which Lamb lays down his cards to inquire; or Ayrton, mildly radiant, whispers the continual triumph of "Don Giovanni," for which Lamb, incapable of opera, is happy to take his word. Now and then an actor glances on us from "the rich Cathay" of the world behind the scenes, with news of its brighter human-kind, and with looks reflecting the public favour,—Liston, grave beneath the weight of the town's regards, or Miss Kelly, unexhausted in spirit by alternating the drolleries of high farce with the terrible pathos of melodrama,—or Charles Kemble mirrors the chivalry of thought, and ennobles the party by bending on them looks beaming with the aristocracy of nature. Meanwhile, Becky lays the cloth on the side-table, under the direction of the most quiet, sensible, and kind of women, who soon compels the younger and more hungry of the guests to partake largely of the cold roast lamb or boiled beef, the heaps of smoking roasted potatoes, and the vast jug of porter, often replenished from the foaming pots, which the best tap of Fleet Street supplies. Perfect freedom prevails, save when the hospitable pressure of the mistress excuses excess; and, perhaps, the physical enjoyment of the play-goer, exhausted with pleasure, or of the author, jaded with the labour of the brain, is not less than that of the guests at the most charming of aristocratic banquets. As the hot water and its accompaniments appear, and the severities of whist relax, the light of conversation thickens. Hazlitt, catching the influence of the spirit from which he has lately begun to abstain, utters some fine criticism with struggling emphasis; Lamb stammers out puns suggestive of wisdom for happy Barron Field to admire and echo; the various driblets of talk combine into a stream, while Miss

Lamb moves gently about to see that each modest stranger is duly served, turning, now and then, an anxious, loving eye on Charles, which is softened into a half-humorous expression of resignation to inevitable fate, as he mixes his second tumbler! This is on ordinary nights, when the accustomed Wednesday-men assemble; but there is a difference on great extra nights, gladdened by "the bright visitations" of Wordsworth or Coleridge; the cordiality of the welcome is the same, but a sedater wisdom prevails. Happy hours were they for the young disciple of the then desperate, now triumphant, cause of Wordsworth's genius, to be admitted to the presence of the poet who had opened a new world for him in the undiscovered riches of his own nature, and its affinities with the outer universe; whom he worshipped the more devoutly for the world's scorn; for whom he felt the future in the instant, and anticipated the "All hail hereafter!" which the great poet has lived to enjoy. To win him to speak of his own poetry, to hear him recite its noblest passages, and to join in his brave defiance of the fashion of the age, was the solemn pleasure of such a season, and, of course, superseded all minor disquisitions. So, when Coleridge came, argument, wit, humour, criticism, were hushed; the pertest, smartest, and the cleverest felt that all were assembled to listen; and if a card-table had been filled, or a dispute began before he was excited to continuous speech, his gentle voice, undulating in music, soon

> "Suspended *whist*, and took with ravishment
> The thronging audience."

TALFOURD'S *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.*



IV.

GENTLEMANLINESS.

REPOSE and cheerfulness are the badge of the gentleman—repose in energy. The Greek battle pieces are calm; the heroes, in whatever violent actions engaged, retain a serene aspect.

EMERSON, 1860.

YOU may depend upon it, religion is, in its essence, the most gentlemanly thing in the world. It will *alone* gentilise, if unmixed with cant; and I know nothing else that will, *alone*. Certainly not the army, which is thought to be the grand embellisher of manners. COLERIDGE'S *Table-Talk*, 1830.

A GENTLEMAN is a Christian in spirit that will take a polish. The rest are but plated goods; and however excellent their fashion, rub them more or less, the base metal appears through. WALKER'S *Original*, 1835.

A CHRISTIAN is God Almighty's gentleman: a gentleman, in the vulgar, superficial way of understanding the word, is the devil's Christian. But to throw aside

these polished and too current counterfeits for something valuable and sterling, the real gentleman should be gentle in everything, at least in everything that depends on himself—in carriage, temper, constructions, aims, desires. He ought, therefore, to be mild, calm, quiet, even, temperate—not hasty in judgment, not exorbitant in ambition, not overbearing, not proud, not rapacious, not oppressive, for these things are contrary to gentleness. Many such gentlemen are to be found, I trust; and many more would, were the true meaning of the name borne in mind and duly inculcated. But alas! we are misled by etymology; and because a gentleman was originally *homo gentilis*, people seem to fancy they shall lose caste unless they act as Gentiles.

Guesses at Truth.

ALL that goes to constitute a gentleman—the carriage, gait, address, gestures, voice; the ease, the self-possession, the courtesy, the power of conversing, the success in not offending, the lofty principle, the delicacy of thought, the happiness of expression, the taste and propriety, the generosity and forbearance, the candour and consideration, the openness of hand—these qualities, some of them come by nature, some of them may be found in any rank, some of them are a direct precept of Christianity. But the full assemblage of them, bound up in the unity of an individual character, do we expect they can be learned from books? Are they not necessarily acquired, where they are to be found, in high society? The very nature of the case leads you to say so. You cannot fence without an antagonist, nor challenge all comers in disputation before you have supported a thesis: and in like manner, it stands to reason, you cannot learn to converse till you

have the world to converse with. You cannot unlearn your natural bashfulness, or awkwardness, or stiffness, or other besetting infirmity, till you serve your time in some school of manners.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN *on the Office and Work of Universities.*

A THOROUGH English gentleman—Christian, manly, and enlightened—is more, I believe, than Guizot or Sismondi could comprehend; it is a finer specimen of human nature than any other country, I believe, could furnish. Still, it is not a perfect specimen by a great deal; and therefore it will not do to contemplate ourselves only, or content ourselves with saying that we are better than others, and scorn to amend our institutions by comparing them with others.

DR ARNOLD, 1860.

IN Christ's communication with His apostles, there is always a marked dignity and delicacy, a total absence of all that coarseness and vulgarity into which Wesley's doctrine—that ministers have no more to do with being gentlemen than with being dancing-masters—would infallibly lead us. Yet even in Christ, the Lord and Master of His disciples, there is a sympathy which is a very different thing from condescension, a spirit of unaffected kindness, and, I had almost said, of sociability, which the spirit of gentlemanliness has doubtless greatly dulled in the Church of England. "I have called you friends," is a text which applies to the Christian minister in his dealings with his brethren and equals, in an infinitely stronger degree than it could do to Him who was our Lord and Master, and whose calling us brethren was not of nature, but out of the condescension of His infinite love. And he who shall

thus far keep, and thus far get rid of, the spirit of gentlemanliness, would go near to make the Church of England all but perfect, no less in its popularity than in its deserving of popularity. *Ibid.*, 1831.

I KNEW a plain village carrier in whom lurked much of the gentlemanly feeling. My wife and myself were, for a few weeks in the cold months, lodgers in his house. During that time this man laid aside his evening pipe (ye smokers, estimate this act of self-denial!), nor could be prevailed upon to resume it, having settled in his own mind that it must be annoying to a lady. Many would have laughed, seeing him leaning in his smock on a gate in the summer evenings, his beloved long clay enjoyed now without check, had I pointed him out as a true gentleman. But in my mind he ranked as such. He is one proof of many that the character may exist quite independent of accidental advantages, though, of course, these are of value in setting it off, and without them it is rather latent than developed. *Contemporary Review*, 1867.

STRONG in a single-hearted humility, a perfect unconsciousness of self, an honest and sincere absorption in high and holy themes and objects, there was in him what we so seldom see, a perfect logic of life; his minutest deeds were the true results of his sublimest principles. His whole nature, moral, physical, and intellectual, was simple, pure, and cleanly. He was temperate as an anchorite in all matters of living,—avoiding, from a healthy instinct, all those intoxicating stimuli then common among the clergy. In his early youth, indeed, he had formed an attachment to the almost universal clerical pipe,—but, observing a delicate woman once nauseated by coming into an atmosphere which he and

his brethren had polluted, he set himself gravely to reflect that what could so offend a woman must needs be uncomely and unworthy a Christian man, wherefore he laid his pipe on the mantel-piece, and never afterwards renewed the indulgence. In all his relations with womanhood, he was delicate and reverential, forming his manners by that old precept, "The elder women entreat as mothers, the younger as sisters,"—which rule, short and simple as it is, is nevertheless the most perfect *resumé* of all true gentlemanliness.

The Minister's Wooing.

THE first condition for obtaining respect in England in any class, is to be what is called a *gentleman;* an expression that has no corresponding term in French, and a perfect knowledge of which implies in itself alone a pretty long familiarity with English manners. The term *gentilhomme* with us is applied exclusively to birth, that of *homme comme il faut* to manners and station in society, those of *galant homme* and *homme de merite* to conduct and character. A *gentleman* is one who, with some advantages of birth, fortune, talent, or situation, unites moral qualities suitable to the place he occupies in society, and manners indicating a liberal education and habits. The people of England have a remarkably nice feeling in this respect, and even the splendour of the highest rank will seldom mislead them. If a man of the highest birth depart in his conduct, or merely in his manners, from what his situation requires of him, you will soon hear it said, even by persons of the lowest class, "Though a lord, he is not a gentleman."

M. DE STAËL HOLSTEIN'S *Letters on England.*

ST PAUL was the ideal of a gentleman. Witness his delicacy and tact, seen pre-eminently in advice and

reproof: "*I praise you not*"—this is his euphemism for "*I blame you,*" "*I partly believe it,*" when told of the divisions among his children. Mark his delicate tact with Festus, Agrippa, Felix. Note his dignity and sweetness in receiving the gift from the Philippian church; the grace with which he rejoices that "your care of me hath flourished again;" then the anxious guarding against hurting their feelings, also the hopefulness for them: "Wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity." Let any one curious in these points read from the 10th to the 21st verse of Philippians iv. The passage is full of the subtle touches of the character. Professor Blunt, in the first of his lectures on the "Parish Priest," admirably traces out this characteristic of St Paul, though from another point of view than ours. And, once more, if any reader would have a perfect model of consummate tact and intense delicacy, let him study St Paul's urging of a request that might have been a claim, in the Epistle to Philemon. *Contemporary Review*, 1869.

WHAT it is that constitutes the look of a gentleman is more easily felt than described; we all know it when we see it, but do not know how to account for it, or to explain in what it consists. Ease, grace, dignity, have been given as the exponents and expressive symbols of this look; but, I would rather say, that an habitual self-possession determines the appearance of a gentleman. He should have the complete command, not only over his countenance, but over his limbs and motions. In other words, he should discover, in his air and manner, a voluntary power over his whole body, which, with every inflection of it, should be under the control of his will. It must be evident that he

does as he likes, without any restraint, confusion, or awkwardness. He is, in fact, master of his person, as the professor of any art or science is of a particular instrument; he directs it to whatever use he pleases and intends. Wherever this power and faculty appear, we recognise the look and deportment of the gentleman—that is, of a person who, by his habits and intercourse with society, has had little else to do than to study those movements, and that carriage of the body, which were accompanied with most satisfaction to himself, and were to excite the approbation of the beholder. Ease, it might be observed, is not enough; dignity is too much. There must be a certain *retenue*, a conscious decorum, added to the first—and a certain "familiarity of regard, quenching the austere countenance of control," in the other, to answer to our conception of this character. Perhaps, propriety is as near a word as any to denote the manners of the gentleman; elegance is necessary to the fine gentleman; dignity is proper to noblemen; and majesty to kings! HAZLITT.

WHEN we reflect upon the condition of English country gentlemen, we must perceive that much of their happiness has arisen from their independence of mind; and much from their maintaining what is called *independent fortunes.* It was long their boast, their honest pride, to despise show and frippery, to do without the luxuries of a city, yet to live hospitably and in a manner becoming their station. They paid their debts regularly. They thanked God that they were independent of all men, and could speak their minds freely on every subject, private or public, without fear or reward. Between this independence of mind and of fortune there is such an intimate connexion,

that the one must be destroyed, if the other be sacrificed. If country gentlemen, from the desire to make a figure in the metropolis, or to outshine their neighbours, enter into contests of extravagance and scenes of fashionable dissipation; if, instead of living upon their own estates, and attending to their own affairs, they crowd to water-drinking places, and think only of hazard or Newmarket, the consequences must be, the ruin of their private fortunes, and the forfeiture of their political integrity. Instead of being their country's pride and the bulwark of her freedom, they will become the wretched slaves of a party, or the despicable tools of a court. They will be contemned and ridiculed by their superiors in rank, whom with unequal steps they awkwardly pursue. They will be detested by their neighbours, their inferiors, their tenantry, and dependents, and by the nation whose interests they abandon or betray. For when a country gentleman has lived beyond his income, what is his resource? Not trade, not business of any kind: to that he cannot stoop; for this he is not qualified. He has no resource but to sell his vote, if he be in Parliament; or, if he be not, to solicit and bargain, perhaps by his county interest, with parliamentary friends, who may provide for his sons, or procure for him the means of repairing his shattered fortune. But what can restore his independence of mind?

EDGEWORTH'S *Essays on Professional Education*, 1808.

THERE exists in England a *gentlemanly* character, a *gentlemanly* feeling, very different even from that which is the most like it, the character of a well-born Spaniard, and unexampled in the rest of Europe. This feeling

probably originated in the fortunate circumstance, that the titles of our English nobility follow the law of their property, and are inherited by the eldest sons only. From this source, under the influences of our constitution, and of our astonishing trade, it has diffused itself in different modifications through the whole country. The uniformity of our dress among all classes above that of a day-labourer, while it has authorised all classes to assume the appearance of gentlemen, has at the same time inspired the wish to conform their manners, and still more their ordinary actions in social intercourse, to their notions of the gentlemanly, the most commonly-received attribute of which is a certain generosity in trifles. On the other hand, the encroachments of the lower classes on the higher, occasioned and favoured by this resemblance in exteriors, by this absence of any cognisable marks of distinction, have rendered each class more reserved and jealous in their general communion, and, far more than our climate or natural temper, have caused that haughtiness and reserve in our outward demeanour, which is so generally complained of among foreigners.

COLERIDGE, *in The Friend*, 1812.





V.

GOOD MANNERS AND GOOD BREEDING.

MANNERS are of more importance than laws. In a great measure, the laws depend on them. The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarise or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe. They give their whole colour to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them. BURKE.

THE ascendant obtained by French manners has perhaps prepared foreigners to believe them invincible. There is but one method of resisting this influence; and that consists in very decided national habits and character. From the moment that men seek to resemble the French, they must yield the advantage to them in everything. MADAME DE STAËL'S *Germany*, 1812.

WITH respect to what are termed polite manners, without sacrificing too much the sincerity of language, I would wish my countrymen to adopt just so much of European politeness, as to be ready to make all those little sacrifices of self which render European manners amiable, and relieve society from the disagreeable scenes to which rudeness often subjects it. Here [in Paris], it seems that a man might pass a life without encountering a single rudeness. In the pleasures of the table, they are far before us, because with good taste they unite temperance. They do not terminate the most sociable meals by transforming themselves into brutes. I have never yet seen a man drunk in France, even among the lowest of the people. Were I to proceed to tell you how much I enjoy their architecture, sculpture, painting, music, I should want words. It is in these arts they shine. The last of them, particularly, is an enjoyment, the deprivation of which, with us, cannot be calculated. I am almost ready to say it is the only thing which from my heart I envy them, and which, in spite of all the authority of the Decalogue, I do covet.

JEFFERSON'S *Correspondence*,
20th September 1785.

How far the States General can proceed towards a thorough reform of abuse, cannot be foreseen. In my opinion, a kind of influence, which none of their plans of reform take into account, will elude them all—I mean the influence of women in the government. The manners of the nation allow them to visit, alone, all persons in office, to solicit the affairs of the husband, family, or friends, and their solicitations bid defiance to laws and regulations. This obstacle may seem less to

those who, like our countrymen, are in the precious habit of considering right as a barrier against all solicitation. Nor can such a one, without the evidence of his own eyes, believe in the desperate state to which things are reduced in this country from the omnipotence of an influence which, fortunately for the happiness of the sex itself, does not endeavour to extend itself in our country beyond the domestic line.

JEFFERSON'S *Correspondence*,
December 4, 1788.

[If Jefferson could revisit France and America at the present day, he would probably find that the wonderful influence of fashionable women, with their "happy ways of doing things," in the political world, is quite as great at Washington, under President Grant, as it is in Paris, under the French Emperor.]

WE send girls of a timid, retreating disposition to the boarding-school, to the riding-school, to the ball-room, or wheresoever they can come into acquaintance and nearness of leading persons of their own sex; where they might learn address, and see it near at hand. The power of a woman of fashion to lead, and also to daunt and repel, derives from their belief that she knows resources and behaviours not known to them; but when these have mastered her secret, they learn to confront her and recover their self-possession.

EMERSON'S *Conduct of Life.*

GRACE in women has more effect than beauty. We sometimes see a certain fine self-possession, an habitual voluptuousness of character, which reposes on its own sensations, and derives pleasure from all around it, that is more irresistible than any other attraction.

There is an air of languid enjoyment in such persons, "in their eyes, in their arms, and their hands, and their face," which robs us of ourselves, and draws us by a secret sympathy towards them. Their minds are a shrine where pleasure reposes. Their smile diffuses a sensation like the breath of spring. Petrarch's description of Laura answers to this character, which is indeed the Italian character. Titian's pictures are full of it: they seem sustained by sentiment, or as if the persons whom he painted sat to music. HAZLITT.

WHAT do you think made our friend Lord Albemarle, colonel of a regiment of guards, governor of Virginia, groom of the stole, and ambassador to Paris—amounting in all to sixteen or seventeen thousand a year? Was it his birth? No; a Dutch gentleman only. Was it his estate? No; he had none. Was it his learning, his parts, his political abilities and application? You can answer these questions easily and as soon as I can make them. What was it, then? Many people wondered, but I do not. It was his air, his address, his manner, and his graces. He pleased, and, by pleasing, became a favourite; and by becoming a favourite, became all that he has been since. LORD CHESTERFIELD.

MANNERS are the happy ways of doing things; each one a stroke of genius or of love, now repeated and hardened into usage, they form at last a rich varnish, with which the routine of life is washed, and its details adorned. If they are superficial, so are the dew-drops which give such a depth to the morning meadows. Manners are very communicable; men catch them from each other. Consuelo, in the romance, boasts of the lessons she had given the nobles in manners, on the stage and in real life. Talma taught Napoleon the art

of behaviour. Genius invents fine manners, which the baron and the baroness copy very fast, and, by the advantage of a palace, better the instruction. They stereotype the lesson they have learned into a mode. The power of manner is incessant—an element as unconcealable as fire. The nobility cannot in any country be disguised, and no more in a republic or a democracy than in a kingdom. No man can resist their influence. There are certain manners which are learned in good society, of that force, that, if a person have them, he or she must be considered and is everywhere welcome, though without beauty, or wealth, or genius. Give a boy address and accomplishments, and you give him the mastery of palaces and fortunes where he goes; he has not the trouble of earning or owning them; they solicit him to enter and possess.

EMERSON'S *Conduct of Life.*

WHAT is it that makes some women so charming—some men so pleasant? What quality that diffuses an aroma, an influence as of rose-leaves about them? that manifests itself in hands that receive us with graceful warmth, in eyes that beam with kindly pleasure, in smiles so genuine, so tender; in the general radiance of reception. What a benignant sunshine of welcome! how soothing to be cared for! how easily the time passes! And what constitutes this charm? for we are not supposing it to arise from any deep moral or intellectual superiority, which, truth to say, does not often exhibit itself in this way. Surely it is a natural sweetness, an inherent tenderness of sympathy—pervading rather than deep—acting upon a desire to please. There are some persons on whom society acts almost chemically, compelling them to be charming. It is part of them-

selves to meet advances, to labour in their graceful way, to create a favourable impression and to give pleasure; and yet, perhaps, our arrival was, after all, ill-timed—our approach at least was not welcome—we interrupted, we necessitated an effort. If at night we could overhear our friend's summary of the day, we might find ourselves classed as one of its troubles and hindrances: and, as we have said, we might unjustly feel a twinge of ill-usage. But is it not something not to have been made uncomfortable at the time—to have spent a happy hour instead of sitting on thorns, as with certain of our acquaintance we should inevitably have been made to do? They are not necessarily more sincere because they take no pains to conceal that we are in their way. The kindly welcomer has been as true to his character all the while as our surly friend has been to his. It would have cost too much, it would have been impossible for him to be ungracious. Thus he is neither insincere, for he has sincerely wished to please, nor, what might seem the other alternative, affected, for he has been acting according to his nature. *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Amidst all the vaunted equality of the American freemen, there seemed to be a more implicit deference to custom, a more passive submission to what is assumed to be the public opinion of the day or hour, than would be paralleled in many aristocratic or even despotic communities. This quiet acquiescence in the prevailing tone—this complete abnegation of individual sentiment, is naturally most perceptible in the domain of politics; but I thought that it also, in no inconsiderable degree, pervaded the social circle, biassed the decisions of the judicial bench, and even infected the solemn teachings of the pulpit. To this source may probably, in some

measure, be traced the remarkable similarity in the manners, deportment, conversation, and tone of feeling which has so generally struck travellers from abroad in American society. Who that has seen can ever forget the slow and melancholy silence of the couples who walk arm-in-arm to the tables of the great hotels, or of the unsocial groups who gather round the greasy meals of the steamboats, lap up the five minutes' meal, come like shadows, so depart? One of their able public men made an observation to me, which struck me as pungent, and perhaps true—"That it was probably the country in which there was less misery and less happiness than in any other part of the world."

THE EARL OF CARLISLE'S *Impressions of America.*

SOCIETY is infected with rude, cynical, restless, and frivolous persons who prey upon the rest, and whom no public opinion concentrated into good manners, forms accepted by the sense of all, can reach; the contradictors and railers at public and private tables, who are like terriers, who conceive it the duty of a dog of honour to growl at any passer-by, and do the honours of the house by barking him out of sight. I have seen men who neigh like a horse when you contradict them, or say something which they do not understand: then the over-bold, who make their own invitation to your hearth; the persevering talker, who gives you his society in large saturating doses; the pitiers of themselves—a perilous class; the frivolous Asmodeus, who relies on you to find him in ropes of sand to twist; the monotones; in short, every stripe of absurdity;—these are social inflections which the magistrate cannot cure or defend you from, and which must be intrusted to the restraining force of custom, and proverbs, and familiar

rules of behaviour impressed on young people in their school days. In the hotels on the banks of the Mississippi, they print, or used to print, among the rules of the house, that "No gentleman can be permitted to come to the public table without his coat;" and in the same country, in the pews of the churches, little placards plead with the worshippers against the fury of expectoration. Charles Dickens self-sacrificingly undertook the reformation of our American manners in unspeakable particulars. I think the lesson was not quite lost; that it held bad manners up, so that the churls could see the deformity. Unhappily, the book had its own deformities. We ought not to need to print in a reading-room a caution to strangers not to speak loud; nor to persons who look over fine engravings, that they should be handled like cobwebs and butterflies' wings; nor to persons who look at marble statues, that they shall not smite them with canes. But, even in the perfect civilisation of this city, such cautions are not quite needless in the Athenæum and City Library.

EMERSON'S *Conduct of Life.*

EXPERIENCE has thoroughly convinced me of the great practical importance of good manners, as a means of smoothing down the little asperities of society, and of rendering the communications between man and man profitable, easy, and agreeable. Under these impressions I cannot rightly do otherwise than express my earnest desire, that the younger members of our society may more and more estimate the advantage of polite manners, and study a true civility towards all around them. May they never so mistake our religious principles as to imagine that there is anything to be found in them which justifies a want of refinement, gentleness,

and delicate attention, or which can lead us to withhold from our superiors that respectful demeanour, and that willing service, so evidently their due.

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY.

I VENTURE to take the present opportunity of suggesting to the consideration of my young friends, whether it is not proper for us, when we speak to a person much older than ourselves, or otherwise our superior, to use the family name, in addition to the first name of the person addressed. This simple and unexceptional mark of deference prevents the appearance of undue familiarity; and let it be remembered, that undue familiarity not only involves a breach of good manners, but is often productive of moral injury. *Ibid.*

THERE cannot be a more injudicious way of improving a person's manners than that which was adopted in my own case—viz., directing his attention to that point—and, above all, setting him to copy the manners of others. If he is bent, and solely bent, on giving pleasure, he will easily *catch* in good society those forms and expressions which are, as it were, the language (in many cases, the arbitrary language) for giving utterance to that wish. He will then be thinking of others, not of himself, which is the very essence of politeness. By the opposite plan you drive him to think of himself; and of others only, in reference to the figure he makes in their eyes, the result of which must be either shyness or affectation, and generally both together, the former springing from fear of exposure, the other from ambition for display. I, accordingly, in whom the former much predominated, suffered all the agonies of extreme shyness for many years, and if the efforts to which I was continually stimulated had been, in any degree success-

ful, or had been applauded as such, I should probably have gone on to affectation, and have remained conscious all my life; but finding no encouragement, I was fortunately driven to utter despair. I then said to myself, "Why should I endure this torture all my life to no purpose? I would bear it still if there was any progress made, any success to be hoped for; but since there is not, I will die quietly without taking any more doses. I have tried my very utmost, and find that I must be as awkward as a bear all my life in spite of it. I will endeavour to think as little about it as a bear, and make up my mind to endure what can't be cured." From this time I struggled as vigorously to harden myself against censure as ever I had to avoid it, like a stag at bay (who faces about to fight when he finds that flight is vain), and with as much effort as the said stag, for it is not without a hard and persevering struggle that consciousness can be shaken off. I was acting more wisely than I thought at the time, for I had not then that clear view of the subject that I now have, and consequently I succeeded beyond my expectations, for I not only got rid of the personal suffering of shyness, but also of most of those faults of manner which consciousness produces, and acquired at once an easy and natural manner, careless, indeed, in the extreme, from its originating in a stern defiance of opinion which I had convinced myself must ever be against me; rough and awkward, for smoothness and grace are quite out of my way, and of course tutorially pedantic; but unconscious, and therefore giving expression to that good-will towards men which I really feel; and these, I believe, are the main points.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY'S *Commonplace Book.*

In the year 1821, I made, in London, in a spirit of wager, a very decisive and satisfactory experiment as to the effect of civil and courteous manners on people of various ranks and descriptions. There were in the place a number of young Americans, who frequently complained to me of the neglect and rudeness experienced by them from citizens to whom they spoke in the streets. They asserted, in particular, that, as often as they requested directions to any point in the city toward which they were proceeding, they either received an uncivil and evasive answer, or no answer at all. I told them that my experience on the same subject had been exceedingly different; that I had never failed to receive a civil reply to my questions—often communicating the information requested; and that I could not help suspecting that their failure to receive similar replies arose, in part at least, if not entirely, from the plainness, not to say the bluntness, of their manner in making their inquiries. The correctness of this charge, however, they sturdily denied, asserting that their manner of asking for information was good enough for those to whom they addressed themselves. Unable to convince them by words of the truth of my suspicions, I proposed to them the following simple and conclusive experiment. Let us take together a walk of two or three hours in some of the public streets of the city. You shall yourselves designate to me the persons to whom I shall propose questions, and the subjects also to which the questions shall relate; and the only restriction imposed is, that no question shall be proposed to any one who shall appear to be greatly hurried, agitated, distressed, or in any other way deeply pre-occupied in mind or body, and no one shall speak to the person questioned but myself. My proposition being accepted,

out we sallied, and to work we went; and I continued my experiment until my young friends surrendered at discretion, frankly acknowledging that my opinion was right, and theirs, of course, wrong; and that, in our passage through life, courtesy of address and deportment may be made both a pleasant and powerful means to attain our ends and gratify our wishes. I put questions to more than twenty persons of every rank, from the high-bred gentleman to the servant in livery, and received, in each instance, a courteous and, in most instances, a satisfactory reply. If the information asked for was not imparted, the individual addressed gave an assurance of his regret at being unable to communicate it. What seemed most to surprise my friends was, that the individual accosted by me almost uniformly imitated my own manner. If I uncovered, as I usually did in speaking to a gentleman, or even to a man of ordinary appearance and breeding, he did the same in his reply; and when I touched my hat to a liveried coachman or waiting-man, his hat was immediately under his arm. So much may be done, and such advantages gained, by simply avoiding coarseness and vulgarity, and being well-bred and agreeable. Nor can the case be otherwise. For the foundation of good-breeding is good nature and good sense, two of the most useful and indispensable attributes of a well-constituted mind. Let it not be forgotten, however, that good-breeding is not to be regarded as identical with politeness; a mistake which is too frequently, if not generally, committed. A person may be exceedingly polite without the much higher and more valuable accomplishment of good-breeding. *Autobiography of* DR CALDWELL,

Philadelphia, 1855.



VI

CONCENTRATION AND METHOD.

YOU must elect your work; you shall take what your brains can, and drop all the rest. Only so can that amount of vital force accumulate which can make the step from knowing to doing. No matter how much faculty of idle seeing a man has, the step from knowing to doing is rarely taken. 'Tis a step out of a chalk circle of imbecility into fruitfulness.

EMERSON.

METHOD means primarily a way or path of transit. From this we are to understand that the first idea of method is a progressive transition from one step to another in any course. If in the right course, it will be the true method; if in the wrong, we cannot hope to progress.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

THE absence of method, which characterises the uneducated, is occasioned by a habitual submission of the understanding to mere events and images as such, and independent of any power in the mind to classify or appropriate them. The general accompaniments of time

and place are the only relations which persons of this class appear to regard in their statements. As this constitutes *their* leading feature, the contrary excellence, as distinguishing the well-educated man, must be referred to the contrary habit. Method, therefore, becomes natural to the mind which has been accustomed to contemplate not *things* only, or for their own sake alone, but chiefly the *relations* of things, either their relations to each other, or to the state and apprehension of the hearers. To enumerate and analyse these relations, with the conditions under which alone they are discoverable, is to teach the science of method. *Ibid.*

ALL my life long
I have beheld with most respect the man
Who knew himself and knew the ways before him,
And from amongst them chose considerately,
With a clear foresight, not a blindfold courage,
And having chosen with a steadfast mind
Pursued his purposes.

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

ONE great use of philosophy is to give us an extensive command of particular truths, by furnishing us with general principles, under which a number of such truths can be comprehended. A person in whose mind casual associations of time and place make a lasting impression, has not the same inducements to philosophise, with others who connect things together, chiefly by the relations of cause and effect, or of premises and conclusion. I have heard it observed that those men who have risen to the greatest eminence in the profession of law, have been in general such as had, at first, an aversion to the study. The reason probably is that, to a mind fond of principles, every study must be at first disgusting, which

presents to it a chaos of facts apparently unconnected with each other. But this love of arrangement, if united with persevering industry, will, at last, conquer every difficulty; will introduce order into what seemed, on a superficial view, a mass of confusion, and reduce the dry and uninteresting detail of positive statutes into a system comparatively luminous and beautiful.

STEWART'S *Philosophy of the Human Mind.*

WE have all to keep ahead if we can, and in order to do so we must economise our means. But it is one of the first rules of economy not to do two things, nor have two things to do, when one will do. The shabby, unsuccessful, and blundering—that is, the people who make the mob of life—are generally so because they will not concentrate their powers, their thoughts, their expenditure, on one object, one work, one line of life, one residence, one circle of friends, or whatever is within their reach, measure, and compass.

Times, December 11, 1863.

"ENLARGE not thy destiny," said the oracle; "endeavour not to do more than is given thee in charge." The one prudence in life is concentration; the one evil is dissipation; and it makes no difference whether our dissipations are coarse or fine,—property and its cares, friends, and a social habit, or politics, or music, or feasting. Everything is good which takes away one plaything and delusion more, and drives us home to add one stroke of faithful work. Friends, books, pictures, lower duties, talents, flatteries, hopes,—all are distractions which cause oscillations in our giddy balloon, and make a good poise and a straight course impossible. EMERSON.

To concentrate your powers on any given object—to go directly to the point, looking neither to the right nor to the left, and resolutely determining to succeed—is to secure success. If once you begin to *sprawl*, you are lost. I learned this lesson very early in life, on the box of the North Devon coach, receiving the rudiments of my education as a Jehu. It was night. I drove from Andover to Blackwater; and three elderly insides were ignorant of the danger to which they were exposed. "Keep them well together. Don't let them sprawl," was all the advice I received from my instructor. The lesson was worth remembering on the great turnpike of life. I do not mean by this that we are to reject collateral aids. On the other hand, I would suffer all tributary streams to flow freely into the great main channel of our action. You may drive a dozen horses in the same chariot, if you can only keep them well together. You must converge to a centre, not diverge from it. If I were to give way to the allurements of biographical illustration, I should soon fill a volume, instead of only a few pages; but here are a few lines from Plutarch, which I quote rather in the way of caution than of example: "There was in the whole city but one street in which Pericles was ever seen, the street which led to the market place and to the council house. He declined all invitations to banquets, and all gay assemblies and company. During the whole period of his administration he never dined at the table of a friend." Emerson cites this with commendation in one of his lectures. But I cannot help thinking that it is a mistake. You should never forget the market place nor the council house. But you may expediently dine at the table of a friend, or invite a friend to dine at your table, in the interests of the market place or the council

house. Self-help is, doubtless, a great thing, but mutual help is not to be despised. We may often make a greater stride on to success by "dining at the table of a friend," than by staying at home to post up a ledger, or to wade through a volume of statistics. Successful men, we may be sure, have not confined themselves to direct action, or looked only to immediate results. More failures are consummated by want of faith and want of patience than by anything else in the world. We cannot grow rich by sowing mustard-seeds on a damp flannel, though they begin to sprout before our eyes. Concentration is not isolation or self-absorption. "Stick to your business, and your business will stick to you;" an excellent doctrine, doubtless; but what if I stick to my business more closely by smoking a cigar in my back parlour, than by serving customers in my front shop? What if I put aside some important work, claiming attention, to dress for dinner, and to convey myself to the table of an influential friend, on the chance of gaining more by going out than by staying at home? When I was a very young man, I wrote essays in illustration of what I then believed to be the folly of such a course. But as I grow old, every year convinces me more and more that social intercourse, of the right kind, is a material aid to success. Often the gain is palpable to you at once, and you count your advantage as you take off your dress-coat. But if not, it will find you out after many days: you have sown and in due season you will reap. If you do nothing more than assert your individuality—make yourself a living presence among men, instead of a myth, a *nominis umbra*—you may be sure that you have done something. Am I more or less likely to read your book, or to buy your picture, or to say a good word for you, if I

have a chance, to some man in authority, for sitting next you at our friend Robinson's, and thinking you a pleasant fellow? At all stages of your journey it will be the same.' *Cornhill Magazine*, 1860.

I HAVE such strong faith in the power that attends a habit of confining the attention to the present moment, that I should be disposed to make it the ground-work of every system of education. Have a work for every moment, and mind the moment's work. Surely, if some such principle as this were at the root of our teachings, it must be greatly helpful in delivering the mind from that visionary state of thinking wherein it is always making images, and building castles in the air, and being suffered to stray and run about as it likes, is sure to be taken captive by a troop of idle fancies that devour its noble capabilities, and reduce it to a dry and withered condition, in which it necessarily becomes brittle, and soon irritated, soon decomposed, and the victim of futile impatience with everything and everybody, oftentimes it does not know why.

Reminiscences of Thought and Feeling.

ANOTHER great aid to the establishment of internal peace, is a strong and steady habit of resisting impulse; and it is one which will necessarily grow out of that other good one of minding the present moment's business, and having a business to mind. Impulsive people are almost always idle and vacant-minded; and it is curious to observe how instantaneously many of the working classes become impulsive when the necessity for labour is removed. There is more drunkenness and mischief on a Saturday night and Sunday than on any other days of the week, in the lower orders of society, just because, having nothing to do, and no mental nor

moral culture to show them the danger of impulse, and point them to the duty of resisting it, they yield to that natural hunger for agreeable sensation which, though exercised upon different objects, is the same in its nature, whether in prince or peasant; and which manifests itself from the cradle to the grave, in hasty jumps and jerks of fancy, to get, or to do something, which it is a thousand chances to one will produce us more or less of mischief and misery when it is gone or done.

Ibid.

Do instantly whatever is to be done; take the hours of reflection or recreation after business, and never before it. When a regiment is under march, the rear is often thrown into confusion, because the front do not move steadily and without interruption. It is the same thing with business. If that which is first in hand is not instantly, steadily, and regularly despatched, other things accumulate behind, till affairs begin to press all at once, and no human brain can stand the confusion; pray, mind this—it is one of your few weak points—a habit of the mind it is which is very apt to beset men of intellect and talent, especially when their time is not regularly filled up, but left at their own arrangement. But it is like the ivy round the oak, and ends by limiting, if it does not destroy, the power of manly and necessary exertion. I must love a man so well to whom I offer such a word of advice, that I will not apologise for it, but expect to hear you are become as regular as a Dutch clock—hours, quarters, minutes—all marked and appropriated. SIR WALTER SCOTT.

ONE signal advantage possessed by a mind of this character is, that its passions are not wasted. The

whole measure of passion of which any one with important transactions before him is capable, is not more than enough to supply interest and energy for the required practical exertions; therefore, as little as possible of this costly flame should be expended in a way that does not augment the force of action. But nothing can contribute or be more destructive to vigour of action, than protracted anxious fluctuation, through resolutions adopted, rejected, resumed, suspended; while yet nothing causes a greater expense of feeling; the heart is fretted and exhausted by being subjected to an alternation of contrary excitements, with the ultimate mortifying consciousness of their contributing to no end. The long-wavering deliberation whether to perform some bold action of difficult virtue, has often cost more to feeling than the action itself, or a series of such actions, would have cost; with the great disadvantage, too, of not being relieved by any of the invigoration which the man in action finds in the activity itself—that spirit created to renovate the energy which the action is expending. When the passions are not consumed among dubious musings and abortive resolutions, their utmost value can be secured by throwing all their animating force into effective operation.

FOSTER *on Decision of Character.*

MOST men have, in the very traditions and rules of the professions by which they earn their bread, a discipline ready made for them. The lawyer, the physician, the clergyman, the merchant, the engineer, and artisans of the different crafts, all more or less have been admitted into their respective walks of life through an established course of training, and have the manner of their daily activity marked out for them by institu-

tion, custom, rules of trade, and penalties. Life to them, or, at least, the professional part of their life, is, to a considerable extent, governed by routine. It is very different with the man of letters. The most lawless being on earth, the being least regulated by any authority out of himself, is the literary man. What is called Bohemianism in the literary world is only an extreme instance of a phenomenon belonging to literature as such. All literature is, in a sense, though not in the same sense, a vast Bohemianism. It is the permeation of ordinary society by a tribe of wild-eyed stragglers from the Far East, who are held in check in general matters by the laws of society, and many of whom, in those portions of their lives that do not appertain to the peculiar tribe-business, may be eminently respectable, and even men of rank and magistracy, but who, in what does appertain to the peculiar tribe business, work absolutely in secret, and are free from all allegiance except to themselves, and perhaps also in some small degree, to one another. For what is the peculiar tribe-business? It is thinking and the expression of thought. This is the most general definition that can be given of literature. Obviously, such a mode of activity is so extensive, admits of so many varieties, that to call it a tribe-business at all, except by way of passing metaphor, would be absurd. On the crowded platform of literature there are scores of tribes inextricably intermixed, as well as stray individuals who, like Harry Gow, acknowledge no tribeship. We hear, indeed, of the brotherhood of literature, of organisations of literature, and the like; but, except for certain benevolent practical purposes, these phrases, so far as they are descriptions of fact, are meaningless. There may one day be a brotherhood of

literature as there may be a brotherhood of mankind, and an organisation of literature as there may be an organisation of human labour; but, for the present, almost as well talk of a brotherhood of men who wear wigs, or an organisation of men who agree in having turquoise rings on their fourth fingers, as of a brotherhood or organisation of men of letters. What affinity, what connexion is established between two persons by the mere fact that both make the expression of thought of some kind or other their business—*i.e.*, that both wield the pen and can construct written sentences? Surely you have first to ask what the thought is, what kind of man is at the back of the pen, what the sentences contain; and after being amused, for example, by the writings of the late Mr Albert Smith, you would not insist on his relationship to Mr John Stuart Mill; nor, fresh from the perusal of the *Newgate Calendar*, would you speak of the compiler as the late Mr Wordsworth's spiritual brother. Yet, despite this visible resolution of what is called the literary or intellectual class into as many sorts of men as there are sorts of men who do not write, there is this class-peculiarity common to them all, that, in the exercise of their craft, unless they bring impediments into it from without, they are more than any other set of men their own masters. Some conditions and restrictions there, indeed, are even in this Ishmaelitish business of thinking and expressing thought. In this country most of these are summed up in the one wholesome difficulty of finding a publisher. Where the circumstances of a writer obviate this difficulty, there is still a certain vague agency of restriction in the laws of blasphemy, sedition, and libel. A closer, more forcible, and more constant kind of regulation arises from the fear of that form of public

opinion which consists in the criticism by the writing-class itself of each other's productions. But these and other forms of regulation from without allowed for, it remains true that the man of letters, or the man of intellectual pursuits, is left, more than any other, in the exercise of his special business, to the free drift of his own powers and tendencies, without any discipline save such as he may make for himself.

PROFESSOR MASSON,
on Genius and Discipline in Literature.

It is an extraordinary gift of nature and training, when a man is like Follett, who, after getting the facts of an involved and intricate case into his mind only at one or two o'clock in the morning, could appear in Court at nine A.M., and there proceed to state the case and all his reasonings upon it, with the very perfection of logical method, every thought in its proper place, and all this at the rate of rapid extempore speaking. The difference between the rate of writing and that of speaking, with most men, makes the difference between producing good material and bad. A great many minds can turn off a fair manufacture at the rate of writing, which, when overdriven to keep pace with speaking, will bring forth very poor stuff indeed. And besides this, most people cannot grasp a large subject in all its extent and its bearings, and get their thoughts upon it marshalled and sorted, unless they have at least two or three days to do so. At first all is confusion and indefiniteness, but gradually things settle into order. Hardly any mind, by any effort, can get them into order quickly. If at all, it is by a tremendous exertion; whereas the mind has a curious power, without any perceptible effort, of arranging in order thoughts upon any subject,

if you give it time. Who that has ever written his ideas on some involved point but knows this? You begin by getting up information on the subject about which you are to write. You throw into the mind, as it were, a great heap of crude, unordered material. From this book and that book, from this review and that newspaper, you collect the observations of men who have regarded your subject from quite different points of view, and for quite different purposes; you throw into the mind cartload after cartload of facts and opinions, with a despairing wonder how you will ever be able to get that huge, contradictory, vague mass into anything like shape and order. And if, the minute you had all your matter accumulated, you were called on to state what you knew or thought upon the subject, you could not do so for your life in any satisfactory manner. You would not know where to begin, or how to go on; it would be all confusion and bewilderment. Well, do not make the slightest effort. What is impossible now will be quite easy by and by. The peas, which cost a sovereign a pint at Christmas, are quite cheap in their proper season. Go about other things for three or four days, and at the end of that time you will be aware that the machinery of your mind, voluntarily and almost unconsciously playing, has sorted and arranged that mass of matter which you threw into it. Where all was confusion and uncertainty, all is now order and clearness; and you see exactly where to begin, and what to say next, and where and how to leave off.

Fraser's Magazine.

THE great secret of studying without injury to the brain is to make sure of every step as we go forward, so that we may never be compelled to make these

violent efforts afterwards to which students who have not been well grounded are constantly liable. I know a "coach" whose specialty it was to pass plucked undergraduates for their degree, and he always succeeded by a simple method which did their brains no harm. He began their classical education over again with the Latin Accidence, and quietly making sure of every step (which other tutors had taken for granted) led his young pupils to the wished-for goal. The first hint which nature gives us that we are doing too much takes the shape of nervousness. If this increases, we are certainly either doing too much, or doing it at wrong hours, or in a wrong way, and some new regimen must be adopted, and strictly adhered to. Two literary men had overworked themselves, and became nervous; one of them stopped at once, and adopted the rule of never writing after lunch, which he still faithfully adheres to; the other went on in his old way, and died in two years from softening of the brain. *Globe*, 1869.

TRUE study is an eminently leisurely process, the great condition of success in it being deliberation, and though it always sufficiently interests the student to keep his faculties lively, it seldom excites him to any dangerous degree. Hence I believe that genuine study is much less injurious to health than is often supposed —certainly much less injurious than many things which are scarcely reputed injurious at all. The processes of genuine and well-directed study positively save the brain by their rational and orderly sequence, by the safe advance from step to step. Study of this kind is like a well-built staircase by which you can climb to a great height with a minimum of fatigue, never lifting the body more than a few inches at a time. But as

there might be such a thing as racing up a staircase, so when we study against time, there is a strain in the mere speed, however good may be the system that we are following. There may also be a strain on the faculties in the direction of them towards a kind of study which is not adapted to our natural gifts. If we learn what nature qualified us to learn, and learn it step by step, without hurry, we incur a minimum of cerebral fatigue, and gain a maximum of acquirement. Study of this kind gently stimulates, and does not fatigue, unless prolonged for an unreasonable length of time. It is positively favourable to health, because it is favourable to cheerfulness; it makes life pleasanter and more interesting, and so far from being injurious to the nervous system, gives it tone and vigour, exactly as manly exercises give tone and vigour to the muscular system. There can be no doubt that men were intended to bear intellectual labour without injury to their health; we are constituted to think and learn, as a fish is constituted to swim or a bird to fly. But a man may bear this healthy kind of mental toil very easily, or may even derive real benefit from it, and yet be quite unable to bear either hurry or cram. A distinguished writer, who has gone through more intellectual labour of a steady kind than most of his contemporaries, tried during two or three years the experiment of writing a pamphlet on the picture exhibitions, but was obliged to give it up, because, to be of any use, the pamphlet had to be issued within a few days of the opening, and could not be written or thought out at leisure, consequently the effort proved injurious to health. *Ibid.*

"When I want to write anything particularly well," said Paley—"to do better than ordinary—I order a

post-chaise and go to Longtown; it is the first stage from Carlisle towards the north; there is a comfortable quiet inn there. I ask for a room to myself: there I am safe from the bustle and trouble of a family; and there I remain as long as I like, or till I finish what I am about. BEST'S *Literary Memorials*, 1829.





VII.

STATESMANSHIP.

THERE is something in the making and ruling a Commonwealth, which (though there be great divines, great lawyers, and great men in all professions) seems to be peculiar only to the genius of a gentleman. HARRINGTON'S *Oceana*, 1659.

THE proper leaders of the people are the gentlemen of England. If they are not the leaders of the people, I do not see why there should be gentlemen.

MR DISRAELI, *June* 20, 1848.

HEREDITARY TENDENCIES.

"IT is a great blessing," says Pascal, "to be born a man of quality, since it brings one man as far forward at eighteen or twenty as another man would be at fifty, which is a clear gain of thirty years." These thirty years are commonly wanting to the ambitious characters of Democracies. The principle of equality, which allows every man to arrive at everything, prevents all men from rapid advancement. DE TOCQUEVILLE'S

Democracy in America, 1841.

Political Connexions and Influence.

In associating with able men, we are to bear in mind that every man of that kind may probably indicate a vein of the material lying in the line of his connexions. Blood relationship, we know, is but an uncertain index; yet, it offers a sufficient probability of congenial talents to invite inquiry from the statesman who is duly eager in his search. And the chosen friends and companions of an able man are still more likely than his born relatives to be endowed with similar gifts.

The Statesman, by Henry Taylor.

Hereditary Talent for Statesmanship.

The recurrence of the same names in high office during more than one generation furnishes a curious commentary on the careless and mistaken commonplaces that talent is not hereditary, or that it is ordinarily traced through the mother. In a competition open to all the nobility and gentry of England, the highest prize was won in succession by three or four sons of fathers who had held the same position. The principal ministers and parliamentary leaders between the death of Pelham and the American war, were Pitt, Fox, and Grenville; the principal ministers and parliamentary leaders between the American war and the Regency were again Pitt, Fox, and Grenville. The ablest politician among the king's friends, the first political economist among the official statesmen of his time, was Mr Jenkinson, who raised himself from an obscure position through the lower ranks of the peerage, to an earldom. His son, the second Earl of Liverpool, held the office of Prime Minister longer than any statesman of modern times. Lord Hardwick's son died Lord

Chancellor. Charles Townsend, who was regarded as only second to Chatham in eloquence, and to Grenville in administrative ability, was the son of the minister who had been famous under George I. as the friend and rival of Walpole. The instances of Grey, of Stanley, of Wilberforce, and of Canning, in latter times, may perhaps be attributed by sceptics to the accidents of interest and opportunity; but, in the earlier list of examples, the superiority of the second generation was as personal and as well deserved as the triumphs of their fathers. Lord Holland, at the time when Fox first astonished the House of Commons, was an elderly invalid, of damaged character, detested by the King, and, as he said himself, the most unpopular man in the country. Neither Lord Chatham nor Mr Grenville lived to see their sons in public life; and the names which they bequeathed to their families only gave the opportunity for a trial, without offering any assurance of success. In after years, it would have been absurd to explain by family connexion the unrivalled excellence of Pitt and of Fox, or even the matured wisdom and authority of Lord Grenville. It might as reasonably be contended that the wit and genius of Horace Walpole were the product of a job of Sir Robert's.

G. S. VENABLES.

AMERICAN STATESMEN IN 1831.

ALL are pretty well agreed that, in the early days of the Republic, the statesmen and members of Congress were much more distinguished men than they now are. They nearly all belonged to the class of country-gentlemen, a race which diminishes every day. The country no longer selects so well. It chooses in general those who flatter its passions and descend to its level. This

effect of democracy, joined to the extreme instability, the entire absence of coherence or permanence, that one sees here, convinces me every day more and more that the best government is not that in which all have a share, but that which is directed by the class of the highest moral principle and intellectual cultivation.

M. DE TOCQUEVILLE *to M. de Kergorlay*, 1831.

AMERICAN STATESMEN IN 1860.

THERE is very much in the material of which legislators, in this country, are made, that tends to inconsiderate and ill-advised action. In England there is what is called a political education. There is a profession of statesmanship. Not a few devote their lives to the attainment of a knowledge of national history; not merely of the biographies of eminent men, which fill so large a place in all written history, but of the whole course of executive and legislative proceeding. To them political economy is not a sealed volume. They illuminate themselves with the lights of past experience. They observe the growth of legal principles, and mark the effect upon society of each new development. Nor are they ignorant of the existing state of the law, of its defects, and of the mischiefs, if any, which need a remedy. Knowing alike the law and the facts which require a legal interposition, they are not insensible to the derangement which even a slight alteration may cause in a great system of rules for municipal conduct, and they are able to foresee it. Such men are cautious. When they enter Parliament, if they bring with them integrity, they bring safety. We have no such class of men in this country. Here men are born legislators While there is a general appreciation of the value and the necessity of a preparatory

education for a theologian, for a medical practitioner, for one whose province it is to administer the laws, or even for an artist, its importance to the lawgiver is not practically felt. Yet, in his relation to the welfare of society, he is behind no one, unless it be the teacher of religion. *The New Englander, February* 1860.

American and English Education.

The Congress of to-day is not equal in average ability to that of 1850. It is not, and never was, and never will be, as long as education in America remains at its present level, equal in political ability and gentlemanly breeding to the British Parliament. The public men of Great Britain are educated men; men who carry into the national councils the deep thought and critical acumen of historians, and the imagination and fervour of poets. No assembly in the world can show so long and brilliant a list of names distinguished in every department of letters as the Parliament of Great Britain. That country may thank her Universities for this glory. Oxford and Cambridge have been strong bulwarks of English liberties ; not but that they have sometimes obsequiously truckled to royal despotism, but in that they have been during the greater part of their history living intellectual organisms, which for the past eight centuries have infused their own life into England's young generations. Brownson's *American Quarterly Review*, *July* 1860.

How English Statesmen are Educated.

The logical English train a scholar as they train an engineer. Oxford is a Greek factory, as Wilton mills weave carpet, and Sheffield grinds steel. They know the use of a tutor as they know the use of a horse, and

they draw the greatest amount of benefit out of both. The reading-men are kept, by hard walking, hard riding, and measured eating and drinking, at the top of their condition, and two days before the examination, do no work, but lounge, ride, or run, to be fresh on the college doomsday. . . .

The number of students and of residents, the dignity of the authorities, the value of the foundations, the history and the architecture, the known sympathy of entire Britain in what is done there, justify a dedication to study in the undergraduate, such as cannot easily be in America, where his college is half suspected by the freshman to be insignificant in the scale beside trade and politics. Oxford is a little aristocracy in itself, numerous and dignified enough to rank with other estates in the realm, and where fame and secular promotion are to be had for study, and in a direction which has the unanimous respect of all cultivated nations. . . .

I looked over the examination-papers of the year 1848 for the various scholarships and fellowships—the Lusby, the Hertford, the Dean-Ireland, and the University (copies of which were kindly given me by a Greek professor), containing the tasks which many competitors had victoriously performed ; and I believed they would prove too severe tests for the candidates for a Bachelor's degree in Yale or Harvard ; and, in general, here was proof of a more searching study in the appointed directions, and the knowledge pretended to be conveyed was conveyed. Oxford sends out yearly twenty or thirty very able men, and three or four hundred well-educated men.

The diet and rough exercise secure a certain amount of old Norse power. A fop will fight, and, in exigent

circumstances, will play the manly part. In seeing these youths, I believed I saw already an advantage in vigour and colour and general habit over their contemporaries in the American colleges. No doubt much of the power and brilliancy of the reading-men is merely constitutional or hygienic. With a hardier habit and resolute gymnastics, with five miles more walking or five ounces less eating, or with a saddle and gallop of twenty miles a day, with skating and rowing matches, the American would arrive at as robust exegesis, and cheery and hilarious tone. I should readily concede these advantages, which it would be easy to acquire, if I did not find also that they read better than we, and write better.

English wealth falling on their school and university training makes a systematic reading of the best authors and to the end of a knowledge how the things whereof they treat really stand; whilst pamphleteer or journalist reading for an argument for a party, or reading to write, or, at all events, for some by-end imposed on them, must read meanly and fragmentarily. Charles I. said that he understood English law as well as a gentleman ought to understand it.

Then they have access to books; the rich libraries collected at every one of many thousands of houses, give an advantage not to be attained by a youth in this country, when one thinks how much more and better may be learned by a scholar, who, immediately on hearing of a book, can consult it, than by one who is on the quest for years, and reads inferior books because he cannot find the best.

Again, the great number of cultivated men keep each other up to a high standard. The habit of meeting well-read and knowing men teaches the art of omission and selection. EMERSON'S *English Traits*, 1849.

A Good School for Statesmen.

Of the two men who have in our times evinced (so far as I can pretend to judge) the most powerful faculties of statesmanship, the one was a sailor, the other a soldier *of the Indian Army*,—Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood, and Major-General Sir Thomas Munro. Both were men who passed a large portion of their lives in what may be called solitude and seclusion, because it was separation from persons of their own race or class. They rarely mixed with any persons but those over whom they exercised an absolute authority, and with whom they transacted business. They lived aloof from the excitements of society and of daily political contention, and from the provocations to petty ambition and vanity. They were eminently meditative statesmen. Whether their oratorical would have been equal to their other powers, they had no opportunity of showing; but if the opportunity had occurred, and if the wisdom which they possessed could have been cultivated in combination with other modes of life, and with the talents necessary for the conduct of affairs in a deliberative assembly and in a cabinet, they, or at least one of them (Sir Thomas Munro), would probably have attained to a more steadily commanding station amongst European politicians than any of their contemporary countrymen have reached, or reaching, have long continued to occupy.

The Statesman, by Henry Taylor.

Mercantile Training.

With regard to mercantile training as conducive to statesmanship, it should hardly, I think, be much esteemed, except in a country where special education

to politics being unhappily unknown, an education in business of any kind may be considered an advantage. It is often supposed that a person brought up in commerce will have some peculiar qualifications for discharging the office of minister for affairs of trade. He may perhaps inspire more confidence in mercantile people, and in so far his previous connexion with commerce may be an advantage to himself, and (if he be an efficient minister) to the public. But this confidence should not in reason result from that connexion. The knowledge and faculties required for negotiating and legislating on commercial subjects, have in truth hardly anything in common with those required for conducting a particular commercial business. There is a good deal of error current upon this head. When any law is projected for the regulation of commerce, some set of merchants will commonly take alarm ; and if they are assured that the law will not hurt them, they will ask —are they not likely to know their own business best ? What should be the answer of a statesman ?—" Surely, gentlemen, each of us knows his own business best ; and your business is to trade, and mine is to legislate."

Ibid.

THE DAYS OF DILETTANTE POLITICIANS ARE GONE.

IT is expected of almost every young man that he should embark in some career, if not professional, then political ; and a political career, even to those who do not hold office, is a much more serious thing than it used to be. The days of dilettante politicians are well-nigh past. A member of Parliament can no longer subsist upon a stock of great principles and an occasional fine speech. Public business consists now of dry detail in enormous masses ; and he who is called upon

to deal with it is constrained to take upon himself some moderate share at least of the infinite drudgery by which the masses are broken down. This is a wholesome element in the lives of our aristocratic youth; and if they shall aspire to a prominent position in political life, they must undergo an amount of labour in itself enough to entitle to respect the man who, not being in want of bread, shall submit to it from an impulse of no unworthy ambition.

TAYLOR'S *Notes from Books.*

PARLIAMENTARY TRAINING.

IT was a remark of the late Mr Wilberforce, that men seldom succeeded in the House of Commons who had not entered it before thirty years of age. In order to apprehend the humours of so mixed a body, and to be in some sort of harmony with it, the quick impressibility of youth is required, and its powers of ready adaptation. It is by partly yielding to such humours that a statesman partly also governs them; and he who has not been trained to the requisite pliancy will hardly possess himself of the plastic faculty which is its counterpart. If a man have the property of thus conforming himself without having been trained to it in youth, it will generally be found to be in him rather an infirmity than a power, for when a man has it by nature, and not by a guiding force put upon nature, it will be commonly accompanied by some want of constancy of mind and tenacity of purpose.

The Statesman, by HENRY TAYLOR.

THE RIGHT TEMPERAMENT FOR A STATESMAN.

I HAVE a theory that the temperament and habits of mind of individual statesmen have a good deal to do

with government. I do not yet believe that we are all compounded into some great machine, of which you can exactly calculate the results.

Ellesmere. What is your pet temperament for a statesman?

Milverton. That is a large question. One thing I should be inclined to say with respect to his habits of mind—He should doubt to the last, and then act like a man who has never doubted.

Ellesmere. Cleverly put, but untrue, after the fashion of you maxim-mongers. He should not act like a man who has never doubted, but like a man who was not in the habit of acting till he had received sufficient information. He should not convey to you the idea of a man who was given to doubt, or not to doubt; but of one who could wait till he had inquired.

Milverton. Your criticism is just. Well, then, another thing which occurs to me respecting his habits of mind is, that he should be one of those people who are not given to any system, and yet who have an exceeding love of improvement, and disposition to regulate.

Ellesmere. That is good. I distrust systems. I find that men talk of principles, and mean, when you come to inquire, rules connected with certain systems.

Milverton. This enables me to bring my notions of government interference to a point. It should be a principle in a statesman's mind that he should not interfere so as to deaden private action; at the same time he should be profoundly anxious that right and good should be done, and consequently not fear to undertake responsibility. He should not be entrapped, mentally, into any system of policy which held him to interfere, or not to interfere there; but he should be inclined to look at each case on its own merits. This is

very hard work. Systems save trouble—the trouble of thinking. ARTHUR HELPS.

THE AMBITION OF AN HONEST STATESMAN.

ALMOST from my first entrance upon the study of law, I considered politics as an ultimate object, and a concurrent occupation. Political adventure is a game which I am disqualified from playing by many circumstances of my character, and which I am resolved to decline. But some share in public business, acquired by reputation, and supported on an independent footing, is a fair object, and almost the only reward that stimulates me for the law. . . . There is a low prudence in rearing the fabric of one's fortunes, which fixes the ambition (if it may be called by so proud a name) on the actual possession of places and emolument; and there are some living instances which prove this to be quite a sure game, provided there are never any compunctious visitings of principle or personal regard. There is a more virtuous discretion, which limits a man's schemes of exertion to his professional sphere, and to the honest accumulation of large profits and small praises, such as the English bar seems almost infallibly to bestow on diligent abilities. But there is a more elevated prudence which does not stop at affluence in its prospect, but ventures to include the chances of lasting service to mankind, and of a good name impressed upon the history of the times.

FRANCIS HORNER.



VIII.

POCOCURANTEISM, CYNICISM, SCEPTICISM.

NIL *admirari* is the motto which men of the world always affect. They think it vulgar to wonder, or be enthusiastic. They have so much corruption, and so much charlatanism, that they think the credit of all high qualities must be delusive.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

I SUPPOSE that pococuranteism (excuse the word) is much the order of the day among young men. I observe symptoms of it here [at Rugby], and am always dreading its ascendancy, though we have some who struggle nobly against it. I believe that "*Nil admirari,*" in this sense, is the devil's favourite text, and he could not choose a better to introduce his pupils into the more esoteric parts of his doctrine. And therefore I have always looked upon a man infected with this disorder of anti-romance as on one who has lost the finest part of his nature, and his best protection against everything low and foolish. DR ARNOLD, 1835.

A MAN is to exhibit no strong emotion: it is unmanly. If he is glad, he must not look it. If he loses a great deal more money than he can afford on the Derby, he must take it coolly. Everything is to be taken coolly; and some indurated folk no doubt are truly as cool as they look. Let me have nothing to do with such. *Nil admirari* is not a good maxim for a man. The coolest individual who occurs to me at this moment is Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*. *He* was not a pleasant character. That coolness is not human. It is essentially satanic. A. K. H. BOYD.

"Is there any news to-day?" inquired the doctor "Nothing at all, sir," replied Mr Maldon. "There's an account about the people being hungry and discontented down in the North; but they are always being hungry and discontented somewhere." The doctor looked grave, and said, as though he wished to change the subject, "Then there's no news at all; and no news, they say, is good news." "There's a long statement in the papers, sir, about a murder," observed Mr Maldon; "but somebody is always being murdered, and I didn't read it." A display of indifference to all the actions and passions of mankind was not supposed to be such a distinguished quality at that time, I think, as I have observed it to be considered since. I have known it very fashionable indeed. I have seen it displayed with such success, that I have encountered some fine ladies and gentlemen who might as well have been born caterpillars. DICKENS, *in David Copperfield.*

As for me, by the blessing of indifference, I have simplified my politics into an utter detestation of all existing governments; and as it is the shortest and most agreeable and summary feeling imaginable, the

first moment of a universal republic would convert me into an advocate for single and uncontrolled despotism. The fact is, riches are power, and poverty is slavery, all over the earth, and one sort of establishment is no better, nor worse, for a *people* than another. I shall adhere to my party, because it would not be honourable to act otherwise; but as to *opinions*, I don't think politics *worth* an *opinion*. *Conduct* is another thing: if you begin with a party, go on with them. I have no consistency except in politics, and *that* probably arises from my indifference on the subject altogether.

BYRON, 1814.

"You are going to devote yourself," said Louisa, "as I gather from what Mr Bounderby has said, to the service of your country. You have made up your mind to show the nation the way out of all its difficulties."

"Mrs Bounderby," he returned, laughing, "upon my honour, no. I make no such pretence to you. I have seen a little, here and there, up and down; I have found it all to be very worthless, as everybody has, and as some confess they have, and some do not; and I am going in for your respected father's opinions—really because I have no choice of opinions, and may as well back them as anything else."

"Have you none of your own?" asked Louisa.

"I have not so much as the slightest predilection left. I assure you I attach not the least importance to any opinions. The result of the varieties of boredom I have undergone, is a conviction (unless conviction is too industrious a word for the lazy sentiment I entertain on the subject), that any set of ideas will do just as much good as any other set, and just as much harm as any other set. There's an English family with a charming

Italian motto—'What will be, will be.'' It's the only truth going!"

This vicious assumption of honesty in dishonesty—a vice so dangerous, so deadly, and so common—seemed, he observed, a little to impress her in his favour. He followed up the advantage, by saying in his pleasantest manner—a manner to which she might attach as much or as little meaning as she pleased: "The side that can prove anything in a line of units, tens, hundreds, and thousands, Mrs Bounderby, seems to me to afford the most fun, and to give a man the best chance. I am quite as much attached to it as if I believed it. I am quite ready to go in for it to the same extent as if I believed it. And what more could I possibly do, if I did believe it?"

"You are a singular politician," said Louisa.

"Pardon me; I have not even that merit. We are the largest party in the state, I assure you, Mrs Bounderby, if we all fell out of our adopted ranks and were reviewed together."

Hard Times, by CHARLES DICKENS.

VOLTAIRE was by birth a mocker and light pococurante; which natural disposition his way of life confirmed into a predominant, indeed all-pervading habit. Far be it from us to say, that solemnity is an essential of greatness; that no great man can have other than a rigid vinegar aspect of countenance, never to be thawed or warmed by billows of mirth! There are things in this world to be laughed at, as well as things to be admired; and his is no complete mind that cannot give to each sort its due. Nevertheless, contempt is a dangerous element to sport in; a deadly one, if we habitually live in it. How, indeed—to take the lowest view of this

matter—shall a man accomplish great enterprises, enduring all toil, resisting temptation, laying aside every weight, unless he zealously love what he pursues? The faculty of love, of admiration, is to be regarded as the sign and the measure of high souls: unwisely directed, it leads to many evils; but without it there cannot be any good. Ridicule, on the other hand, is indeed a faculty much prized by its possessors; yet, intrinsically, it is a small faculty, we may say the smallest of all faculties that other men are at the pains to repay with any esteem. It is directly opposed to thought, to knowledge, properly so called; its nourishment and essence is denial, which hovers only on the surface. While knowledge philosophers of Nootka Sound were pleased to laugh at the manœuvres of Cook's seamen, did that render these manœuvres useless? and were the seamen to stand idle, or to take to leather canoes, till the laughter abated? Let a discerning public judge.

But leaving the question for the present, we may observe, at least, that all great men have been careful to subordinate this talent or habit of ridicule; nay, in the ages which we consider the greatest, most of the arts that contribute to it have been thought disgraceful for freemen, and confined to the exercise of slaves. With Voltaire, however, there is no such subordination visible: by nature, or by practice, mockery has grown to be the irresistible bias of his disposition, so that, for him, in all matters the first question is, not what is true, but what is false; not what is to be loved, and held fast, and earnestly laid to heart, but what is to be contemned, and derided, and sportfully cast out of doors. Here truly he earns abundant triumph as an image-breaker, but pockets little real wealth. Vanity, with

its adjuncts, as we have said, finds rich solacement; but for aught better, there is not much. Reverence, the highest feeling that man's nature is capable of, the crown of his whole moral manhood, and precious, like fine gold, were it in the rudest forms, he seems not to understand, or have heard of even by credible tradition. The glory knowledge imparts dwells far below. Moreover, it is by nature selfish and morally trivial; it cherishes nothing but our vanity, which may in general be left safely enough to shift for itself. Little "discourse of reason," in any sense, is implied in ridicule: a scoffing man is in no lofty mood, for the time; shows more of the imp than of the angel. This too when his scoffing is what we call just, and has some foundation on truth; while again the laughter of fools, that vain sound said in Scripture to resemble the "crackling of thorns under the pot" (which they cannot heat, but only soil and begrime), must be regarded, in these latter times, as a very serious addition to the sum of human wretchedness; nor perhaps will it always, when the increase of crime in the metropolis comes to be debated, escape the vigilance of Parliament.

We have, oftener than once, endeavoured to attach some meaning to that aphorism, vulgarly imputed to Shaftesbury, which, however, we can find nowhere in his works, that *ridicule is the test of truth.* But of all chimeras that ever advanced themselves in the shape of philosophical doctrines, this is to us the most formless and purely inconceivable. Did or could the unassisted human faculties ever understand it, much more believe it? Surely, so far as the common mind can discern, laughter seems to depend not less on the laugher than on the laughee: and now, who gave laughers a patent to be always just, and always omniscient? If the

philosopher's glory of knowing and believing is all but a stranger to him; only with that of questioning and qualifying is he familiar. Accordingly, he sees but a little way into Nature: the mighty All, in its beauty, and infinite mysterious grandeur, humbling the small *Me* into nothingness, has never even for moments been revealed to him; only this or that other atom of it, and the differences and discrepancies of these two, has he looked into and noted down. His theory of the world, his picture of man and man's life is little; for a Poet and Philosopher, even pitiful. Examine it in its highest developments, you find it an altogether vulgar picture; simply a reflex, with more or fewer mirrors of Self and the poor interests of Self. "The Divine Idea, that which lies at the bottom of Appearance," was never more invisible to any man. He reads history, not with the eye of a devout seer, or even of a critic; but through a pair of mere anti-catholic spectacles. It is not a mighty drama, enacted on the theatre of Infinitude, with Suns for lamps, and Eternity as a background; whose author is God, and whose purport and thousandfold moral leads us up to the "dark with excess of light" of the throne of God; but a poor wearisome debating-club dispute, spun through ten centuries, between the *Encyclopédie* and the *Sorbonne*. Wisdom or folly, nobleness or baseness, are merely superstitious or unbelieving: God's Universe is a larger Patrimony of St Peter, from which it were well and pleasant to hunt out the Pope.

CARLYLE'S *Essay on Voltaire*, 1829.

MEN who possess (or who imagine that they possess) a few secret anecdotes of men in power, as a part of their own private collection, are generally disposed to

consider all causes deduced from the state of society at large, as idle dreams or unmeaning generalities. But such men mistake accidents for principles. Even when the stories to which they give credit are facts, and have had an active influence, still these facts must have derived their power of being powerful from the tone of public opinion, and the aggregate of national circumstances. They are sometimes occasions, but scarcely ever *causes;* they may sometimes determine the particular moment at which an event shall take place, but they rarely, indeed, give birth to the event itself. When these private intrigues are most powerful, they are no more than the minor springs of the machine, and most often they are merely the indexes and minute-hands.

COLERIDGE.

CHARLES II. had a very ill opinion of men and women, and did not think that there was either sincerity or chastity in the world out of principle, but that some had either the one or the other out of humour or vanity. He thought that nobody did serve him out of love; and so he was quits with all the world, and loved others as little as they loved him. The ruin of his reign, and of all his affairs, was occasioned chiefly by his delivering himself up, at his first coming over, to a mad range of pleasure.

BURNET'S *History of his own Times.*

NOTWITHSTANDING Rochefoucault tells us himself, with so honest a gravity, that he had *les sentimens beaux,* and that he approved *extrêmement les belles passions,* his obvious tendency is not to ennoble; he represents the tragi-comedy of the great world, but he does not excite us to fill its grand parts; he tells us some of the real motives of men, but he does not tell us also the better motives with which they are entwined.

This want of faith in the sublime is what I find, not to blame, but to lament in most of the authors who have very shrewdly, and with a felicitous and just penetration, unravelled the vices and errors of mankind. I find it in La Bruyère, in Rochefoucault, even in the more weak and tender Vauvenargues, whose merits have, I think, been so unduly extolled by Dugald Stewart; I find it in Swift, Fielding (admirable moralist as the latter indubitably is in all the lesser branch of morals); and among the ancients, who so remarkable for the same want as the sarcastic and inimitable Lucian? But let us not judge hastily. This want of nobleness, so to speak, is not necessarily the companion of shrewdness. But mark, where we find the noble and the shrewd united, we acknowledge at once a genius of the very highest order,—we acknowledge a Shakespeare, a Tacitus, a Cervantes.

BULWER'S *England and the English.*

MISANTHROPY is so dangerous a thing, and goes so far in sapping the very foundations of morality and religion, that I esteem the last part of Swift's *Gulliver* (that, I mean, relative to his Houyhnhnms and Yahoos) to be a worse book to peruse than those which we forbid, as the most flagitious and obscene. One absurdity in this author (a wretched philosopher, though a great wit) is well worth remarking. In order to render the nature of man odious and the nature of beasts amiable, he is compelled to give human characters to his beasts, and beastly characters to his men; so that we are to admire the beasts, not for being beasts, but amiable men; and to detest the men, not for being men, but detestable beasts. Whoever has been reading this unnatural filth, let him turn for a moment to a

Spectator of Addison, and observe the philanthropy of that classical writer—I may add, the superior purity of his diction and his wit.

HARRIS'S *Philological Inquiries.*

APEMANTUS, the snarling philosopher in *Timon of Athens*, is modelled after the cynics, particularly after Diogenes. In Timon's prosperity, he haunts his entertainments for the purpose of indulging his impertinent humour of carping at the company he meets there. Like Diogenes himself, he is no more than an ill-mannered hound, who deserves perpetual kickings, and is tolerated only for his wit. It is a character easy to assume and to support, requiring nothing more than a sufficient stock of cool impudence and effrontery. Vanity is at the bottom. A desire to brazen out the inconveniences of low-breeding, and awkward manners, and a love of notoriety, no matter how obtained, are enough to make a cynic. The well-known repartees of Plato and Aristippus set the character of Diogenes in its true light: we may be certain that Alexander, in their celebrated dialogue, looked upon him merely as a buffoon, tumbling about for his diversion in a peculiar fashion; but he was undoubtedly possessed of much wit and humour. The jesting of Apemantus is as plain-spoken, and ill-natured, if not as good, as that of the famed tenant of the tub; and Timon keeps him at his table as an original—a sort of lion, who is as much a part of the diversion of the evening as the masque of the Amazons, or the lofty strain of the hautboys.

DR MAGINN.

THERE are certain forms of this disease [cynicism], at once the vilest and the commonest, which rarely characterise the man's whole nature, but break out at

intervals. Such is the cynical disbelief in human virtue seen in Iago, or Talleyrand, or Charles II.; the disbelief in humanity hardly less cynical, however blandly disguised, of such writers as A'Kempis, or the extreme Calvinist theologians; the cynical tendency to doubt all human nobleness, or purity, or disinterestedness which appears in worldly old age, and which not unfrequently makes others old in what should be the freshness of youth itself:—passing by these partial forms of cynicism as not here relevant, the term, we apprehend, can be with accuracy affixed only to those who entertain a pervading contempt of their fellow-creatures from ascetic ignorance (as Saint Anthony of the Legend), from selfish hardness (as Diogenes), or from practical scepticism (as Montaigne and Pascal).

Westminster Review.

SCEPTICISM, which at first sight seems a disease of the mind, is in reality a disease of the heart. It originates either in the corruption of the political state, or in the degradation of the philosophical spirit.

VINET'S *Outlines of Philosophy and Literature*, 1865.

A NATION where the majority finds itself attacked with the disease of scepticism feels the sap of life oozing away, and if no salutary crisis removes it from this condition, it has only to await dissolution. *Ibid.*

THE one leading characteristic of a French child, or adult, is distrust; the one irreparable disgrace is "to be taken in." The only remedy for such a dire possibility is a preventive one,—*disbelief.* Every man and woman grows up with the firm resolve *not to be duped*, and, to ensure this end, refuses faith to every person and every-

thing, beginning with her own self. Of course, the desire to turn into ridicule what there is a determination not to respect, is one of the first temptations; the national wit aiding, *to scoff* becomes a habit of the intelligence, and *La Blague* is hailed as the sovereign power that guards against every deception.

North American Review.

MUCH has been said lately about Christianity, and the name of Jesus Christ has been frequently introduced into the harangues of demagogues. God forbid that I should suffer my mind to dwell long on these profanations,—this hideous mixture of cynicism and hypocrisy. I shall only suggest one question. If the French nation were sincerely and practically Christian, what would be its conduct in the midst of the terrible difficulties by which it is agitated and perplexed?

The rich and great of the earth would earnestly and perseveringly labour to alleviate the distresses of those beneath them. Their intercourse with the poorer classes would be active, affectionate, morally and physically beneficent. The various sufferings and perils of humanity would call forth corresponding associations, endowments, and works of charity.

The poor and humble would be submissive to the will of God and the laws of society. They would seek the satisfaction of their wants in regular and assiduous labour, the improvement of their condition in good conduct and provident habits, and consolation and hope in the futurity promised to man.

These are the Christian virtues,—they are called Faith, Hope, and Charity. Is this the conduct men are exhorted by the preachers of democracy to pursue? Are these the sentiments which these men, who affect a

veneration for the Founder of Christianity, try to re-kindle in the hearts of the people?

GUIZOT *on Democracy in France.*

DOUBT is the mystic working of the mind on the subject it is *getting* to know and believe. Belief comes out of all this, above ground, like the tree from its hidden *roots.* But now, if even on common things, we require that a man keep his doubts *silent,* and not babble of them till they, in some measure, become affirmations or denials—how much more, in regard to the highest things, impossible to speak of in words at all! That a man parade his doubt, and get to imagine that debating and logic (which means, at best, only the manner of *telling* us your thought, your belief or disbelief, about a thing) is the triumph and true work of what intellect he has,—alas! this is as if you should *overturn* the tree, and, instead of green boughs, leaves, and fruits, show us ugly-taloned roots turned up into the air, and no growth, only death and misery going on!

CARLYLE'S *Lectures on Heroes,* 1842.

ANY amount of questioning on any subject may be admirable, and fruitful of the best results; but there is a certain kind of chattering which is simply mischievous. It proceeds from a foregone assumption that nothing in the world, or possibly beyond it, is worth caring about; that existence is a poor affair, and can only be got through by treating it with a gay indifference. We fear it must be said that—however little he intended it—Thackeray did much to encourage this feeling by his tone of laughing cynicism, and his habit of reducing the stature of most facts to a paltry measure. The lower class of comic literature does the same thing to a much worse degree, for genius is never devoid of nobility.

of feeling, whereas flippant stupidity is at perpetual war with every exalted thought. Humour, at its best, is indeed a gracious and kindly as well as a tricksy spirit; but mere facetiousness is often terribly like the grinning of a death's-head. The existing rage for burlesques has almost banished high art from our theatres; and it is now thought a fine stroke of wit to call the mightiest of English authors by such titles as "the Divine Williams," or "the Avon Party." Gratitude for great things greatly done--joy in the manifestations of power and beauty—hearty admiration of a genius which can so warm and illuminate the sphere it fills—devout self-congratulation that there are or have been in the world souls stronger and higher than our own, in the contemplation of which we may raise and invigorate ourselves,—all these feelings, which, indeed, are not more solemn than joyous, and which, in their superiority to transient moods, take the very sting from mortality, are unknown to those who find their highest pleasure in a jibing and vulgarising spirit. The power of heartily liking anything is forfeited in such minds; their very pleasures, such as they are, are stricken with a kind of impotence. In social matters, the mocking spirit of the day is quite as manifest as in literature, art, and politics. A decay in courtesy, and in respect for parents and old people, is also noticed by those who recollect an earlier generation. By these and other things we declare ourselves an irreverential race; but if all this is only the path by which we are destined to reach a higher level of more assured belief in essentials, to the exclusion of a superstitious reverence for merely accidental modes, the intermediate ground, however unlovely and depressing, will be proved to have possessed a value which at present we can only dimly guess. *Daily News, December* 16, 1869.

In our large cities, the population is godless, materialised,—no bond, no fellow-feeling, no enthusiasm. These are not men, but hungers, thirsts, fevers, and appetites walking. There is no faith in the intellectual, none in the moral universe. There is faith in chemistry, in meat and wine, in wealth, in machinery, in the steam-engine, galvanic battery, turbine-wheels, sewing machines, and in public opinion, but not in divine causes. It is believed by well-dressed proprietors that there is no more virtue than they possess; that the solid portion of society exists for the arts of comfort; that life is an affair to put something between the upper and lower mandibles. How prompt the suggestion of a low motive! Certain patriots in England devoted themselves for years to creating a public opinion that should break down the corn laws and establish free trade. "Well," says the man in the street, "Cobden got a stipend out of it." Kossuth fled hither across the ocean to try if he could rouse the New World to a sympathy with European liberty. "Ay," says New York, "he made a handsome thing of it—enough to make him comfortable for life."

EMERSON'S *Conduct of Life*, 1860.

The inconvenience of this way of thinking is that it runs into indifferentism, and then into disgust. Life is eating us up; we shall be fables presently. Keep cool; it will be all one a hundred years hence. Life's well enough, but we shall be glad to get out of it, and they will all be glad to have us out. Why should we fret and drudge? Our meat will taste to-morrow as it did yesterday, and we may at last have enough of it. "Ah!" said my languid gentleman at Oxford, "there's nothing new or true; and no matter." With a little

more bitterness, the cynic moans. Our life is like an ass led to market by a bundle of hay being carried before him; he sees nothing but the bundle of hay. "There is so much trouble in coming into the world," said Lord Bolingbroke, "and so much more, as well as meanness, in going out of it, that 'tis hardly worth while to be here at all." I knew a philosopher of this kidney who was accustomed briefly to sum up his experience of human nature in saying, "Mankind is a damned rascal;" and the natural corollary is pretty sure to follow—"The world lives by humbug, and so will I." EMERSON'S *Representative Men*, 1848.

IF we look on the doings of man with a merely worldly eye, and pierce below the surface of character, we are apt to feel bitter scorn and disgust for our fellow-creatures. We have lived to see human hollowness: the ashes of the Dead Sea shore; the falseness of what seemed so fair; the mouldering beneath the whited sepulchre: and no wonder if we are tempted to think "friendship all a cheat—smiles hypocrisy—words deceit;" and they who are what is called *knowing* in life contract by degrees, as the result of their experience, a hollow distrust of men, and learn to sneer at apparently good motives. That demoniacal sneer which we have seen, ay, perhaps felt, curling the lip at times, "Doth Job serve God for nought?"

REV. F. W. ROBERTSON.

THERE is another kind of scepticism, which is intrinsically worthless. This is the scepticism of the morning after the debauch, when the reveller begins to realise that he is uncommonly uncomfortable, and that his sufferings are beyond the reach of soda-water or seltzer; then, if he can at all hold the pen, he will

embody his pains in the most dolorous ditties. "The roses are withered—the garlands are torn—the cheek has lost its bloom, the eye its lustre—the head aches intolerably—the high gods are implacable—no, there are no gods—we turn from a mercenary caress (for women are regular she-devils) to an eternal sleep—Death is the end of all things." We do not say that this is an exact diagnosis of the form of the malady from which Mr Swinburne suffers, but we believe that the vehemence of his scepticism does not indicate any serious or deeply-rooted conviction. His anger against the gods is feigned, and his attitude is always more or less artificial and studied. The discontent to which he gives utterance is a purely Pagan discontent. The intelligent denial of a man born and bred in the nineteenth century of the Christian era is a very different affair. "But I am a Greek and a Pagan," says this worshipper of antiquity. Well, be a Greek, then, and cease to be anything to us. As a Greek chorus, your complaint against the gods can be listened to attentively; as the religious conclusions of a philosopher or true poet of the nineteenth century, it is beneath contempt. Our philosophers and poets will tell you that they have got far beyond this stage. The riddles they have to unravel involve finer issues. You are suffering from theological measles or whooping-cough. It may be that you have taken it rather late in life for your own comfort; but, at all events, the sooner you get over it the better, both for yourself and friends.

Fraser's Magazine, 1866.

WHOEVER attacks every principle of belief can destroy none. As long as the foundations of knowledge are allowed to remain on the same level (be it called of

certainty or uncertainty) with the maxims of life, the whole system of human convictions must continue undisturbed. When the sceptic boasts of having involved the results of experience and the elements of geometry in the same ruin with the doctrines of religion and the principles of philosophy, he may be answered, that no dogmatist ever claimed more than the same degree of certainty for these various convictions and opinions, and that his scepticism, therefore, leaves him in the relative condition in which it found them. No man knew better or owned more frankly than Mr Hume, that to this answer there is no serious reply. Universal scepticism involves a contradiction in terms: *it is a belief that there can be no belief.* It is an attempt of the mind to act without its structure, and by other laws than those to which its nature had subjected its operations. To reason without assenting to the principles on which reasoning is founded, is not unlike an effort to feel without nerves or to move without muscles. No man can be allowed to be an opponent in reasoning, who does not set out with admitting all the principles, without the admission of which it is impossible to reason. SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

WE are told that we are living in an age of scepticism; that religious belief is becoming more and more widely separated from common sense and vigorous inquiry; that one or the other must be given up as useless or as dangerous. If this be so, it is a satisfaction to find any great example to the contrary, even though at the distance of more than two thousand years, and in the streets of Pagan Athens:—"Socrates," so speaks the impartial voice of the modern historian,* "was the

* Grote.

reverse of a sceptic: no man ever looked upon life with a more positive and practical eye. No man ever pursued his mark with a clearer perception of the road which he was travelling: no man ever combined, in like manner, the absorbing enthusiasm of a missionary, with the acuteness, the originality, the inventive resource, and the generalising comprehension of a philosopher." Such a union of genuine religious feeling with genuine common sense and profound philosophy may be rare; but amidst the controversies of modern times it is an inexpressible satisfaction to feel that the union is not impossible—to know at the same time that the boldest philosophical enterprise ever undertaken was conceived, executed, and completed, in and through a spirit of intense and sincere devotion. The clash between religion and science was discerned by him, no less clearly than by us—his course was far more difficult than ours, in proportion as Paganism is more difficult than Christianity—yet to the end he retained his hold equally on both; and no faithful history can claim his witness to the one, without acknowledging his witness to the other also. *Quarterly Review*, 1850.

He no longer stands among us. Yet we can fancy what would result were he now to visit us—were he once more to appear with that Silenic physiognomy, with that eccentric manner, with that indomitable resolution, with that captivating voice, with that homely humour, with that solemn earnestness, with that siege of questions—among the crowded parties of our metropolis, under the groves and cloisters of our universities, in the midst of our political, our ecclesiastical, our religious meetings, on the floor of our legislative assemblies, at the foot of the pulpits of our well-filled churches. How

often, in a conversation, in a book, in a debate, in a speech, in a sermon, have we longed for the doors to open, and for the son of Sophroniscus to enter—how often, in the tempest of pamphlets, in the heat of angry accusations, in the discourses that have darkened counsel by words without knowledge, during the theological controversies of the past year, have we been tempted to exclaim, "Oh for one hour of Socrates!" Oh for one hour of that voice which should, by its searching cross-examinations, make men see what they knew, and what they did not know—what they meant, and what they only thought they meant—what they believed in truth—and what they only believed in name—wherein they agreed, and wherein they differed. Differences, doubtless, would still remain, but they would be the differences of serious and thinking men, not the watchwords of angry disputants. The voice of the great cross-examiner himself is indeed silent, but there is a voice in each man's heart and conscience which, if we will, Socrates has taught us to use rightly. That voice, more sacred than the divine monitor of Socrates himself, can still make itself heard; that voice still enjoins us to give to ourselves a reason for the hope that is in us—"both hearing and asking questions." It tells us that with all those imaginary troubles wherewith we vex ourselves without inquiry, "it shall be like as a dream when one awaketh, so shall their image be made to vanish out of the city." It tells us also that for that fancied repose, which self-inquiry disturbs, we shall be more than compensated by the real repose which it gives instead. "A wise questioning is indeed the half of knowledge." "A life without cross-examination is no life at all."

Quarterly Review, 1850.



IX.

THE USES OF ADVERSITY.

UCH dearer be the things which come through hard distress. SPENSER.

SWEET are the uses of adversity, which, like the toad,
Ugly and venomous, yet wears a jewel in its head.
SHAKESPEARE.

THE dream of the injured, patient mind,
That smiles at the wrongs of men,
Is found in the bruised and wounded rind
Of the cinnamon, sweetest then.
ELIZABETH BARRET BROWNING.

PROSPERITY is a great teacher; adversity is a greater. Possession pampers the mind; privation trains and strengthens it. HAZLITT.

GENUINE morality is preserved only in the school of adversity, and a state of continuous prosperity may easily prove a quicksand to virtue. SCHILLER.

ONE month in the school of affliction will teach thee more than the great precepts of Aristotle in seven years; for thou canst never judge rightly of human affairs, unless thou hast first felt the blows, and found out the deceits of fortune. FULLER.

ARE afflictions aught
But mercies in disguise? Th' alternate cup,
Medicinal though bitter, and prepared
By Love's own hand for salutary ends?
MALLET'S *Amyntor and Theodora.*

BY woe, the soul to daring action swells;
By woe, in plaintless patience it excels:
From patience, prudent clear experience springs,
And traces knowledge through the course of things.
Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
Renown:—whate'er men covet and caress.
SAVAGE'S *Wanderer.*

TIME and suffering, and self-knowledge, the mystery and vanity and misery of life, quicken and exalt our sense and relish of that more ample greatness, that more exact goodness, that sense of God, which the contemplation of nature and art, at their utmost of power and beauty, ought always to awaken and fill. It is the clear shining *after* the rain. Pain of body or mind, by a double-edged, but, in the main, merciful law of God and of our nature, quickens and exalts other senses besides that of itself. Well is it that it does. Sweetness is sweeter than before to him who knows what bitterness has been, and remembered sweetness, too. The dislocation of the real and the ideal—the harsh shock of which comes on most men before forty, and on

most women sooner, when the two lines run on together —sometimes diverging frightfully, for the most part from their own fault—but never meet, makes him look out all the more keenly for the points where he can *shunt* himself; it is a secret worth knowing and acting upon, and then you can go and come as you list. This is our garden, every one's garden of Hesperides, into which, if we only know the right *airt* and door—it is small and lowly, and only for children, and those who can stoop and make themselves so for the nonce—we may at any time enter, and find sunshine and shadows, and soft air and clear waters, and pluck the golden apples from the laden boughs. And though the dragon is there, he is our own dragon, and it adds to the glory of the new-born day, and gives a strange flavour of peril to its innocent brightness, when we see on the horizon that he is up too, and watching, lying, sinuous and immense, all across the Delectable Mountains, with his chin on his paw on the biggest hill, and the sunlight touching up his scales with gold and purple. This is our paradise at hand—next door, next room, you are in it by thinking of it, it comes in to you if you open *your* door—guarded only to those who have been cast out of it, and under whose flaming sword the small people may creep,—and the only serpent in which each must himself bring or be; and then best of all—if you are in the right garden—this ideal fruit is among the best of whets and tonics and strengtheners for the hard every-day work, and still harder night-and-day suffering, of that real world, which is not much of a garden, but rather a field and a road, with graves as milestones.

DR JOHN BROWN,
Post-Preface to Horæ Subsecivæ.

Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied, and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
Virtue, his heavenly child, designed,
To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
And bade to form her infant mind;
Stern rugged nurse, thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore;
What sorrow was thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learned to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse; and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom, in sable garb arrayed,
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye, that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend;
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy suppliant's head,
  Dread goddess! lay thy chastening hand,
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
  Nor circled with thy vengeful band
(As by the impious thou art seen):
With thundering voice and threatening mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

Thy form benign, O goddess! wear,
  Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there,
  To soften, not to wound, my heart:
The generous spark extinct revive;
Teach me to love and to forgive;
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

GRAY'S *Hymn to Adversity.*

MAN has learnt many things, but he has not learnt how to avoid sorrow. Among his achievements, the safeguard against wretchedness is wanting. Perhaps, indeed, he could scarcely be charged with exaggeration who should hold that the aggregate of man's unhappiness had increased with his increasing culture, and that the acuter sensibility and multiplied sources of distress more than outweigh the larger area from which his pleasures are drawn, and the more numerous means of alleviation at his command. At least, it appears certain that the heaping up of enjoyments, if ever it was designed as a means of producing happiness, has proved a signal failure. When we regard the general tone of feeling of our age, whether as expressed in its literature, in its social intercourse, or even more, perhaps, in its amusements, do we not find ourselves in presence of a

society from which real gladness has well-nigh died out, in which hope is almost extinct? I seem to be reminded of the attempt, so often made, and proved fruitless just as often, by external pleasures and multiplied distractions to beguile, or at least to quiet, a wounded heart. Man's heart is wounded in these latter days; the bright dreams of his youth have vanished; the outpouring of his deepest passion recoils on himself in mockery; but he can attire himself in gorgeous apparel, and fare sumptuously every day. He can lay all lands under contribution, and make Nature serve his pleasures; he can even explore all knowledge—if he will only abstain from asking any question that it truly concerns his manhood to have answered. But surely it is not an open question whether pampered luxury or gratified curiosity heal a wounded spirit.

If happiness is to revisit the earth, or, if it have ever been a stranger there, is to be a stranger no longer, it must come in the form of a genuine joy of heart, a satisfaction of our highest nature. It must come surrounded with light, and bring hope in its train. It must bid our largest and noblest affections spring up and blossom anew. It must visit us, as spring visits the frozen lands, and make our life-blood flow again with a warm current in our veins.

And there are thoughts which would do this; thoughts which are possible to us now: in some sense, indeed, now first possible to us, though open to all men since Christ and His apostles preached. Old thoughts, and yet new; as old as the Gospel, yet taught us with fresh and new proof by the last discoveries of science, which do but gather up the testimony of Nature to that good news, and bid us seek beyond the visible the secret of our life. *The Mystery of Pain.*

In addition to all the characters of Hebrew Monotheism, there exists in the doctrine of the Cross a peculiar and inexhaustible treasure for the affectionate feelings. The idea of the θέανθροπος, the God whose goings forth have been from everlasting, yet visible to men for their redemption as an earthly, temporal creature, living, acting, and suffering among themselves, then (which is yet more important) transferring to the unseen place of His spiritual agency the same humanity He wore on earth, so that the lapse of generations can in no way affect the conception of His identity : this is the most powerful thought that ever addressed itself to a human imagination. It is the που στου which alone was wanted to move the world. Here was solved at once the great problem which so long had distressed the teachers of mankind, how to make virtue the object of passion, and to secure at once the warmest enthusiasm in the heart with the clearest perception of right and wrong in the understanding. The character of the blessed Founder of our faith became an abstract of morality to determine the judgment, while at the same time it remained personal, and liable to love. The written Word and established Church prevented a degeneration into ungoverned mysticism ; but the predominant principle of vital religion always remained that of self-sacrifice to the Saviour. Not only the higher divisions of moral duties, but the simple, primary impulses of benevolence, were subordinated to this new absorbing passion. The world was loved "in Christ alone." The brethren were members of His mystical body. All the other bonds that had fastened down the spirit of the universe to our narrow round of earth were as nothing in comparison to this golden chain of suffering and self-sacrifice, which at once riveted the

heart of man to One who, like himself, was acquainted with grief. Pain is the deepest thing we have in our nature, and union through pain has always seemed more real and more holy than any other.

ARTHUR HALLAM.

THERE is in man a higher than love of happiness: he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness! Was it not to preach forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the poet and the priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; in bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the godlike that is in man, and how in the godlike only has he strength and freedom? Which God-inspired doctrine art thou too honoured to be taught, O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful afflictions, even till thou become contrite and learn it! Oh! thank thy destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hast need of them; the self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is life rooting out the deep-seated, chronic disease, and triumphs over death. On the roaring billows of time thou art not engulphed, but born aloft into the azure of eternity. Love not pleasure; love God. This is the everlasting yea, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him.

Small is it that thou canst trample the earth with its injuries under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno trained thee: thou canst love the earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee. For this a greater than Zeno was needed and He too was sent. Knowest thou that "*worship of sorrow?*" The temple thereof, opened some eighteen centuries ago, now lies in ruins, overgrown with jungle, the habitation of doleful creatures:

nevertheless, venture forward; in a low crypt arched out of falling fragments, thou findest the altar still there, and its sacred lamp perennially burning.

Sartor Resartus, by T. CARLYLE.

FEAR is the mother of foresight: spiritual fear, of a foresight that reaches beyond the grave; temporal fear, of a foresight that falls short; but without fear there is neither the one foresight nor the other; and as pain has been truly said to be "the deepest thing in our nature," so it is fear that will bring the depths of our nature within our knowledge. A great capacity of *suffering* belongs to genius; and it has been observed that an alternation of joyfulness and dejection is quite as characteristic of the man of genius as intensity in either kind. TAYLOR'S *Notes from Books.*





X.

SOLITUDE AND RETIREMENT.

HE that lives alone, lives in danger: society avoids many dangers. MARCUS AURELIUS.

SUCH only can enjoy the country who are capable of thinking when they are there: then they are prepared for solitude, and in that case solitude is prepared for them. DRYDEN.

HE that would be healed of his spiritual infirmities must be sequestered from the throng of the world: that soul never can enjoy God that is not sometimes retired. BISHOP HALL.

WISDOM'S self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers and lets grow her wings,
That, in the various bustle of resort,
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired.
MILTON'S *Comus.*

THERE is no man but may make his own paradise;
And it is nothing but his love and dotage
Upon the world's foul joys that keeps him out on 't;
For he that lives retired in mind and spirit
Is still in paradise. BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

IN that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease; and of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. WORDSWORTH.

WHEN we withdraw from human intercourse into solitude, we are more peculiarly committed in the presence of the Divinity. Yet some men retire into solitude to devise or perpetrate crimes. This is like a man going to meet and brave a lion in his own gloomy desert, in the very precincts of his own dread abode.
REV. JOHN FOSTER'S *Diary*.

IT had been hard to have put more truth and untruth together, in few words, than in that speech, "Whosoever is delighted with solitude, is either a wild beast or a god:" for it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation. BACON.

IT is cowardice, not magnanimity, that sends people into retirement. You, like others, will have many a heartache, and many a struggle with yourself probably, ere you get your schooling completed; but if you keep

to the principles you see to be necessary, you will get well through at last. There have been times when, if there had been any convents to retire to, I should almost have been tempted, so weary was I of the continual warfare with one's self and everybody else; but that is not what we were sent here for, and we must struggle on; and then comes the looking back on time not wholly misspent or wasted, and then we feel satisfied that we have so struggled.

Letters of CAROLINE F. CORNWALLIS.

NOT only of great, but of all sound minds, this is true, that for their sustentation and due nurture they require the two elements, society and solitude. No healthy life is ever lived in which either of these is wanting. And if we turn to books—to judge of mind by its most enduring products—we see the same experience repeated from age to age. There are books enough left us by those who, having never tried to live, have shut themselves within the circle of their own meditations. Wonderful in its variety is the literature of mysticism and sentiment! What a wealth of thought and feeling drawn from the pure depths of human consciousness! Again turn to the memoir-writers and court-gossips. What keen observation of manners, what infinite webs of intrigue they unravel before us, what countless character they have distinguished! But what are the books that instruct us; that speak to us as men; that raise us, but raise us not too high for our duties and our destiny? Between the frivolous and the divine lies the truly human. Wisdom that is from above, yet that can give us no light in this world! Theory without facts is not science, and moralising without experience is not wisdom. A pallid and

dreary jargon is the metaphysics of the schools by the side of the tangible and experimental maxim which flowers out naturally from the intellect that has lived. But unless to this experience be added the maturing influences of meditation and self-knowledge, the result is equally one-sided. We get then that unspiritual and debasing physiology of human conduct—that so-called philosophy of courts—which leaves out of the computation of motive all that separates man from any other species of mammal. In no writer, perhaps, are these two elements that make up wisdom mingled in happier proportion than in Montaigne.

Quarterly Review, 1856.

The student must embrace solitude as a bride. He must have his glees and his glooms alone. His own estimate must be measure enough, his own praise reward enough for him. And why must the student be solitary and silent? That he may become acquainted with his thoughts. If he pines in a lonely place, hankering for the crowd, for display, he is not in the lonely place; his heart is in the market; he does not see; he does not hear; he does not think. But go, cherish your soul; expel companions; set your habits to a life of solitude; then will the faculties rise fair and full within, like forest-trees and field-flowers; you will have results, which, when you meet your fellow-men, you can communicate, and they will gladly receive. Do not go into solitude only that you may presently come into public. Such solitude denies itself; is public and stale. The public can get public experience, but they wish the scholar to replace to them those private, sincere, divine experiences, of which they have been defrauded by dwelling in the

streets. It is the noble, manlike, just thought, which is the superiority demanded of you; and not crowds, but solitude confers this elevation. Not insulation of place, but independence of spirit is essential; and it is only as the garden, the cottage, the forest, and the rock, are a sort of mechanical aids to this, that they are of value. Think alone, and all places are friendly and sacred. The poets who have lived in cities have been hermits still. Inspiration makes solitude anywhere. Pindar, Raffael, Angelo, Dryden, De Staël, dwell in crowds; it may be, but the instant thought comes, the crowd grows dim to their eye; their eye fixes on the horizon—on vacant space; they forget the bystanders; they spurn personal relations; they deal with abstractions, with verities, with ideas. They are alone with the mind.

EMERSON'S *Conduct of Life*, 1860.

IT is alone in solitude we feel
And know what powers belong to us.

. . . . . .

E'en with respect to human things and forms,
We estimate and know them but in solitude.
The eye of the worldly man is insect-like,
Fit only for the near and single objects;
The true philosopher in distance sees them,
And scans their forms, their bearings, and relations.

SIR HUMPHREY DAVY, 1825.

I PRAISE the Frenchman, his remark was shrewd,
How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude!
But grant me still some friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.

COWPER.

LA solitude est certainement une belle chose. Mais il y aurait plaisir d'avoir un amy fait comme vous à qui on peut dire quelque chose que c'est une belle chose. BALZAC, *Lettres Choisies*, 1652.

I AM not sure that one of positively high endowments of mental capacity is not exposed to many disadvantages by seclusion. He does not know his own superiority by comparison; and many have gone to their graves without putting forth their powers, because they did not know their strength. Diffidence, if not fatal to the blaze of genius, is a great check to it; while false confidence exposes mediocrity to ridicule.

Autobiography of SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

WE can ill spare the commanding social benefits of cities; they must be used; yet cautiously and haughtily, and will yield their best values to him who can best do without them. Keep the town for occasions, but the habits should be formed to retirement. Solitude, the safeguard of mediocrity, is to genius the stern friend, the cold, obscure shelter where moult the wings which will bear it farther than suns and stars. He who would inspire and lead his race, must be defended from travelling with the souls of other men, from living, breathing, reading, and writing in the daily time-worn yoke of their opinions. EMERSON.

BLESSED, only and supremely blessed, is he who has ascertained the value of retirement and tranquillity; who is qualified to delight in the silence of groves, and the pleasures of rural solitude! It is then, even under the acutest impressions of sorrow and the gloom of dejection, that the soul collects renovated courage, acquires new strength, and tastes of perennial bliss.

The mind looks with fortitude on the transient sufferings of humanity; solitariness, whether public or private, is no longer dreadful; and the tomb itself becomes a bed of roses. ZIMMERMAN.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean—
This is not solitude, 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

But 'midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
To roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless,
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less
Of all that flattered, followed, sought, or sued;
This is to be alone; this is solitude!

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene;
That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallow'd spot;
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he almost had forgot.

CHILDE HAROLD.

HE, who talks and writes fine essays on solitude, and yet is always uneasy out of society, holds out false lights and deceitful lessons to the world. We desire, therefore, to know what have been the real feelings and habits of an author who puts forth such sentiments and opinions. We are sure that Milton, and Cowley, and Gray, and Beattie, and Cowper loved solitude, and cannot doubt that Dante and Petrarch* loved it. Evelyn loved it, though he wrote an essay against it; and Zimmerman loved it as well as praised it.

Autobiography of SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

FEW men, leading a quiet life, and without any strong or highly varied change of circumstances, have seen more variety of society than I—few have enjoyed it more, or been *bored*, as it is called, less by the company of tiresome people. I have rarely, if ever, found any one out of whom I could not extract amusement or edification; and were I obliged to account for hints afforded on such occasions, I should make an ample deduction from my narrative powers. Still, however, from the earliest time I can remember, I preferred the pleasure of being alone to wishing for visitors, and have often taken a bannock and a bit of cheese to the wood or hill, to avoid dining with company. As I grew from boyhood to manhood, I saw this would not do; and that to gain a place in

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge for their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities now in vain displayed,
For they can lure no farther, and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday.

CHILDE HAROLD

men's esteem, I must mix and bustle with them. Pride and exaltation of spirits often supplied the real pleasure which others seem to feel in society; yet mine certainly upon many occasions was real. Still, if the question was,—eternal company, without the power of returning within yourself, or solitary confinement for life, I should say, "Turnkey, lock the cell!"

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S *Diary*, 1826.

JOHNSON ridicules those praises of solitude which break out from the heart of Cowley, as if they were insincere. Because he hated solitude himself, he thought no one else could love it. Cowley had lived in the bustle of a court, and seen all its falsehoods and impertinences. We may be sick of our own thoughts at last, and perhaps require some change: but no one who knows the force of language, can doubt Cowley's sincerity, unless he be blind with prejudice. There is scarcely any great poet who has not sung the praises of solitude with earnestness.

Autobiography of SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

THERE is a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness to which the imagination of a girl, upon the loss of her first lover, could scarcely have given way, but which he seems to have indulged till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would have probably put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

"My desire," says he, "has been for some years past, though the execution has been accidentally diverted—and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts, which is

the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for his disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to bury himself in some obscure retreat, he might have found, in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently obscure to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his own opinion of the importunity with which he should be summoned back into public life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is much easier than acquisition, and that it would require very little continence to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man by whom we are sure to be treated with neglect, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement need not be much afraid, lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits; even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence when they have tried to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate or relax.

When he was interrupted by company or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfactions. He forgot in the vehemence of his desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries which he was so studious to obviate; for such are the vicissitudes of the world through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, converse and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated; we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the New World, it may be much doubted whether his distance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to have kept away from the *vexations*. It is common for a man who feels pain to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley, having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement. He never suspected that the cause of his unhappiness was within; that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated; and that he was harrassed by his own impatience, which, as it could never be without something to awaken it, would torment him in any country, accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek

happiness by changing anything but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.

DR JOHNSON, *in the Rambler.*

IT is not easy with a mind like ours,
Conscious of weakness in its noblest powers,
And in a world where, other ills apart,
The roving eye misleads the careless heart,
To limit thought, by nature prone to stray
Wherever freakish Fancy points the way;
To bid the pleadings of Self-love be still,
Resign our own and seek our Maker's will;
To spread the page of Scripture, and compare
Our conduct with the laws engraven there;
To measure all that passes in the breast,
Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test;
To dive into the secret depths within,
To spare no passion and no favourite sin,
And search the themes, important above all,
Ourselves, and our recovery from our fall.
But leisure, silence, and a mind released
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increased,
How to secure in some propitious hour
The point of interest, or the post of power,
A soul serene, and equally retired
From objects too much dreaded or desired,
Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,
At least are friendly to the great pursuit.

COWPER.

THIS is my attic room. Sit down, my friend.
My swallow's nest is high and hard to gain;
The stairs are long and steep; but at the end
The rest repays the pain.

For here are peace and freedom ; room for speech
Or silence, as may suit a changeful mood :
Society's hard by-laws do not reach
This lofty altitude.

You hapless dwellers in the lower rooms
See only bricks and sand and windowed walls ;
But here above the dust and smoky glooms,
Heaven's light unhindered falls.

So early in the street the shadows creep,
Your night begins while yet my eyes behold
The purpling hills, the wide horizon's sweep,
Flooded with sunset gold.

The day comes earlier here. At morn I see
Along the roofs the eldest sunbeam peep ;
I live in daylight, limitless and free,
While you are lost in sleep.

I catch the rustle of the maple leaves,
I see the breathing branches rise and fall,
And hear, from their high perch along the eaves,
The bright-necked pigeons call.

Far from the parlours with their garrulous crowds
I dwell alone, with little need of words ;
I have mute friendships with the stars and clouds,
And love-trysts with the birds.

So all who walk steep ways, in grief and night,
Where every step is full of toil and pain,
May see when they have gained the sharpest height,
It has not been in vain.

Since they have left behind the noise and heat;
And though their eyes drop tears, their sight is clear;
The air is purer, and the breeze is sweet,
And the blue heaven more near.

ELIZABETH AKERS (FLORENCE PERCY).
Boston, 1866.

THE serene regularity of a life of study and devotion is so attractive, that I do not wonder at the strong tendency of pious and benevolent men to love ascetic retirement. It *seems* to present a beautiful contrast to the vain and malignant struggles of the world. Its vigorous self-denial *appears* to supply the place of active virtue, and it seems to be solely occupied in the contemplation of virtue and of truth. That all these must, in the majority of those who seek the cloister, be merely fallacious appearances, is a discovery which can be made only by experience. SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

WHAT is the main motive which still determines so many men in the nineteenth century to cut themselves off from the busy outer world, and retire to the shades of cloistral life on the slopes or summits of venerable mountains? Many of the monks are not priests, none are missionaries, few are students. They live plainly and they pray much, but their habits are not those of extravagant austerity, and they have abundance of leisure time on their hands. Why have they chosen such an existence? and, having chosen it, does it content them? The second question must certainly be answered in the affirmative; but what is to be the answer to the first? It is not excessive zeal, nor mystical piety, nor dislike of labour—for they work in their own fields—nor dark fanaticism, that has drawn them up so many feet above the level of the strife and

passions of the hour. To all inquiries as to the inducement which has attracted them thither, there is nearly always the same response. That response is "Tranquillity." We confess the answer does not surprise us. At all periods of the world's history there must exist sensitive temperaments on whom the turmoil of general life acts as a shock; finely balanced organisations to which too much oscillation is equivalent to a total loss of balance; and the more feverish the epoch, the greater must naturally be the number of souls craving for refuge and rest. Even a thinker so thoroughly in harmony with what people call the spirit of the age as Mr Lecky, closes his latest publication with the deliberate expression of opinion that there is no fact in modern history more to be deplored than that the Reformers of the sixteenth century, who, in matters of doctrinal innovation were often so timid, should have levelled to the dust, instead of attempting to regenerate, the whole conventual system of Catholicism. In common with most serious thinkers, he strongly deprecates the principle of asceticism, or the sacrifice of earthly happiness, on which so many monasteries were originally based, just as he laments the luxury and vice which grew up in many of these as a natural result; but he sees that there must ever be a number of timid persons, averse from conflict and competition, and whose chief yearning is, like the present denizens of the monasteries of Mount Athos, for tranquillity. Such people are, of course, to be distinguished from those much more highly organised and complicated characters that occasionally sigh for the shelter of monastic peace, but who, as soon as they have found it, begin sighing again for the excitement of public life. Professor Falmerayer, of Munich, who first broached the theory that the modern

Greeks, far from being descended from the Greeks of old, are of Slavonic origin, being sprung from the hordes who poured over the country in waves of immigration during the Middle Ages, is a striking instance of this latter class of temperaments. He visited Mount Athos, and the monks recognised in him certain characteristics which they thought eminently qualified him to take up his permament abode amongst them. They perceived in him, as he himself relates, the melancholy, the spiritual longings, the appreciation of solitude they themselves knew so well, and a sensitiveness to the influence that wild woods and fresh scenes of nature exercise over the weary. Accordingly, they invited, they pressed him to remain among them. He has himself left on record a picture of the enticements the spot held out to him. "How charmingly the chapel peeps out from the bright green of the leafy chestnut forest, in the midst of vine branches, laurel hedges, valerian, and myrtle!" And so on. Why should he leave "the greatest of all blessings, freedom and peace, and an abode in the laboratory of all virtues," to return to the world? In one special class of convents a man has only to pay £45 to become free from any obligation to work; and this state of life they likewise offered him. More than that; if he preferred it, he was to dwell, not in any of the convents, but in their vicinity, as an "independent associate." He confesses that it was a seductive proposal, but we soon find him, on his return to ordinary life, "devouring the contents of the newspapers, and averring that life would be to him empty and unenjoyable without the range of European ideas." He is an instance of a character not very rare, but still exceptional. The average individual either dreads solitude, or dreads being trampled on by the crowd. We need

scarcely say that to the former type the vast majority of mankind belong; but a respectable minority is represented by the latter. They must have a bad time of it in the latter half of the nineteenth century. They have only to show themselves to be trampled on; for where there is not room, or—what is practically the same thing—there is not supposed to be room for everybody, pushing, elbowing, and scrambling are sure to be pretty freely indulged in. Those who do not like it ought not to be there. But where are they to go? To Mount Athos, perhaps. But Mount Athos is a long way off for most people; yet some folks go almost as far. *Daily News*, 1869.

It is not many months since a well-known London man of fashion suddenly disappeared, and the next one heard of him was that he was in the Dominican convent of Santa Sabina in Rome, which stands on the *Mons Aventinus*, or Hill of Secession. He had seceded with a vengeance, and at this moment he is a rigid Carthusian monk. It was an extreme step, a leap in the dark; and moderate minds at least will always presume that extreme steps and leaps in the dark are to be avoided. We recently reported in our columns how another Englishman of social note has retired with certain companions to a solitary spot in America, and betaken himself to a kind of bucolic pursuits, which, in certain particulars, savour of monastic life. This spontaneous retiring from the crowd, this trying to get away, is not a new phenomenon in the United States; and there, where life is yet more exciting, faster, louder, more terrible in its exacting energy, than ours, we should be prepared to meet with these still more frequent and stronger propensities to discover the philosopher's stone of Mount Athos—

Tranquillity. We shall not be suspected as recommending any human being to go into a monastery, or any set of human beings to set to work and found fresh convents. Our business is only to note the undeniable fact that the high pressure rate of modern movement and civilisation is calculated to breed alarm, discontent, and weariness in certain dispositions, and to add that it would be well if they could be protected against such undesirable conditions of mind. We would prevent the disease, not urge any desperate resource under the specious name of cure. If life—ordinary life—could only itself become more tranquil, or at least not quite so distressingly turbulent, nobody would ever dream of quitting it for a tranquillity as excessive as the excitement of which it is the counterpart. If, however, we persist in maintaining our present pace, we must not be surprised if symptoms of extreme reaction should show themselves, and thousands of people ultimately take up with the Quietism which we had once persuaded ourselves is nothing but an historical phenomenon not likely to recur. *Ibid.*

The monastic system, as it stands forth on the shining pages of Basil (Primate of Cappadocia), bears quite a seductive form. His descriptions of his own seclusion among the mountains of Pontus, and of the pleasures of abstracted meditation and holy exercise, can hardly be read without kindling an enthusiasm of the same order. It was customary with the monks of a later age to select for the site of their establishments the most horrid and pestilential swamps, and this professedly with the intention of mortifying the senses, and of rendering life as undesirable, and as brief too, as possible. Not so Basil: fully alive to the beauties of nature, he exults in the

enjoyment of them. Addressing the friend of his youth, Basil says—"In Pontus God hath shown me a spot precisely suited to my turn of mind and habits. In truth, it is the very scene which heretofore, while idly musing, I had been wont to picture to myself. It is a lofty mountain, enveloped in dense forests; on its northern front it is watered by gelid streams, that sparkle to the eye as they descend. At the foot of the hill a grassy plain spreads itself out, and luxuriates in the moisture that distils perpetually from the heights. Around the level space, the woods, presenting trees of every species, take an easy sweep, so as to form a natural rampart. Calypso's isle, so much praised by Homer, one might contemn in comparison with this spot; in fact itself might almost be called an island, since it is completely encircled and shut in on two sides by deep and precipitous ravines; on another by the fall of a never-failing torrent, not easily forded, and which like a wall excludes intruders. In the rear the jagged and uneven heights, with a semicircular turn, rise from the skirts of the plain, and deny access, except through a single pass of which we are masters. My habitation occupies the ridge of a towering height, whence the landscape, with the many bends of the river, spreads itself fairly to the view; and presents, altogether, a prospect not inferior, as I think, in gay attractions, to that which is offered by the course of the river Strymon, as seen from Amphipolis. That stream indeed moves so sluggishly in its bed as hardly to deserve the name of river; but this, on the contrary, the most rapid I have ever seen, rushes on to a neighbouring rock, whence, thrown off, it tumbles into a deep vortex in a manner that excites the admiration of every beholder. From the reservoir thus formed we are abundantly supplied with water; nor only so, for it

nourishes in its stormy bosom a multitude of fishes.' What might I not say of the balmy exhalations that rise from this verdant region, or of the breezes that attend the flow of the river? Or some perhaps would rather speak of the endless variety of flowers that adorn the ground, or of the innumerable singing birds that make our woods their home. For my own part, my mind is too deeply engaged to give much attention to these lesser matters. To our commendation of this seclusion we are moreover able to add the praise of an unbounded fruitfulness in all kinds of produce, favoured as it is by its position and soil. To me its principal charm (and a greater cannot be) is this—that it yields me the fruits of tranquillity. For not only is the region far remote from the tumult of cities, but it is actually unfrequented by travellers of any sort, a few huntsmen excepted, who make their way hither in search of the game which abounds in it. This indeed is another of its advantages; for though we lack the ferocious bear and wolf that afflict your country, we have deer and goats, sylvan flocks and hares, and other animals of the sort." Who would not turn monk if he might lead the "angelic life" in a Paradise such as that of Basil?

ISAAC TAYLOR'S *History of Fanaticism.*





XI.

SYMPATHY WITH NATURE.

THE individual soul should seek for an intimate union with the soul of the universe.

NOVALIS.

SOMETIMES a common scene in Nature—one of the common relations of life—will open itself to us with a brightness and pregnancy of meaning unknown before. Sometimes a thought of this kind forms an era in life. It changes the whole future course. It is a new creation.
DR CHANNING.

ONE impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things:
We murder to dissect.
WORDSWORTH.

How does Nature deify us with a few and cheap elements? Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous.

EMERSON.

WHEN up some woodland dale we catch
The many-twinkling smile of ocean,
Or with pleased ear bewilder'd watch
His chime of endless motion;
Still, as the singing waves retire,
They seem to grasp with strong desire,
Such signs of love old Ocean gives,
We cannot choose but think he lives.

KEBLE.

I WANT to extract and absorb into my soul the sublime mysticism that pervades all nature, but I cannot. I look on all the vast scene as I should on a column sculptured with ancient hieroglyphics, saying, "There is significance there," and despairing to read. At every turn it is as if I met a ghost of solemn, mysterious, and indefinable aspect; but while I attempt to arrest it, to ask it the veiled secrets of the world, it vanishes. The world is to me what a beautiful and dumb woman would be; I can see the fair features, but there is not language to send forth and impart to me the element of soul. REV. JOHN FOSTER.

IT is not merely the multiplicity of tints, the gladness of tone, or the balminess of the air which delight in the spring; it is the still consecrated spirit of hope, the prophecy of happy days yet to come; the endless variety of nature, with presentiments of eternal flowers which never shall fade, and sympathy with the blessedness of the ever-developing world. NOVALIS.

Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Wordsworth.

In good health the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. Almost I fear to think how glad I am. In the woods, too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period of life soever, is always a child. In the woods is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life—no disgrace, no calamity (leaving me my eyes) which nature cannot repair. Emerson.

In adults, the pleasures of mere colours are very languid in comparison of their present aggregates of pleasure, formed by association. And thus the eye approaches more and more, as we advance in spirituality and perfection, to an inlet for mental pleasure, and an

organ suited to the exigencies of a being whose happiness consists in the improvement of his understanding and his affections. HUXLEY *on Man.*

OUR intellectual pleasures are not only at first generated, but afterwards supported and recruited in part, from the pleasures affecting the eye; which holds particularly in respect of the pleasures afforded by the beauties of nature, and by the imitations of them, which the arts of poetry and painting furnish us with. And for the same reasons, the disagreeable impressions on the eye have some share in generating and feeding intellectual pains. *Ibid.*

WHATEVER beauty there may result from effects of light on foreground objects, from the dew of the grass, the flash of the cascade, the glitter of the birch trunk, or the fair daylight hues of darker things (and joyfulness there is in all of them), there is yet a light which the eye invariably seeks with a deeper feeling of the beautiful,—the light of the declining or breaking day, and the flakes of scarlet cloud burning like watch-fires in the green sky of the horizon; a deeper feeling, I say, not, perhaps, more acute, but having more of spiritual hope and longing, less of animal and present life, more manifest, invariably in those of more serious and determined mind (I use the word serious, not as being opposed to cheerful, but to trivial and volatile), but, I think, marked and unfailing even in those of the least thoughtful dispositions. I am willing to let it rest on the determination of every reader, whether the pleasure which he has received from these effects of calm and luminous distance be not the most singular and memorable of which he has been conscious; whether all that is dazzling in colour, perfect in form, gladden-

ing in expression, be not of evanescent and shallow appealing, when compared with the still small voice of the level twilight behind purple hills, or the scarlet arch of dawn over the dark troublous-edged sea.

RUSKIN'S *Modern Painters.*

NATURE always wears the colours of the spirit. To a man labouring under calamity the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population. EMERSON.

I HAVE no doubt that scenery and climate have a great effect on the spiritual part of imagination, as well as upon the material. Johnson, I think, became more imaginative after he had visited the Hebrides; at any rate, when our minds contemplate him carried about on the waves of the stormy ocean in which these islands are placed, and sleeping with the northern billows beating at the foot of the castellated rock where he is hospitably received, we have a pleasing idea of him which revolts at the disputatious, dreariness, and vulgarity of Bolt Court.

Autobiography of SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

I DROVE to Penshurst this morning, and looked about me; the surpassing loveliness of that drive now, with the tender green of the young leaves, seems made on purpose to comfort one. I *felt* if I did not say, All this delight cannot be made for the bodily eyes only, and nothing for the weary soul; and it seemed to me a stronger argument than all the *sermons* and arguments which we are *wont* to hear contain.

CAROLINE F. CORNWALLIS.

Go into the woods and valleys, when your heart is rather harassed than bruised, and when you suffer from vexation more than grief. Then the trees all hold out their arms to relieve you of the burden of your heavy thoughts; and the streams under the trees glance at you as they run by, and will carry away your trouble along with the fallen leaves; and the sweet-breathing air will draw it off together with the silver multitudes of the dew. But let it be with anguish or remorse in your heart that you go forth into nature, and, instead of your speaking her language, you make her speak yours. Your distress is then infused through all things, and clothes all things, and nature only echoes, and seems to authenticate, your self-loathing or your hopelessness. Then you find the device of your sorrow on the argent shield of the moon, and see all the trees of the field weeping and wringing their hands with you, while the hills, seated at your side in sackcloth, look down upon you prostrate, and reprove you like the comforters of Job. *Hours with the Mystics.*

THE freshness of the air, the singing of the birds, the beautiful aspect of nature, the size of the venerable trees [in Holland Park; he was then on a visit to Lord Holland], gave me altogether a delightful feeling this morning. It seemed there was pleasure even in living and breathing without anything else.

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S *Diary*, *May* 1828.

THE carol of the lark, "the light-enamoured bird," the hum of the bees, the verdure and gorgeous blossoms of the woods,—these are sources of pleasure common to all. So also the perfume of the air, though merely from thorns, and lilacs, and limes, to say nothing of grain, or tedded grass or kine. But all these are nothing

to what a contemplative man can make them by association.

Human Life, by the Author of "Tremaine."

DEVOTION to the beauty of the external forms of nature, affords to men of great excitability and a passionate sense of the beautiful, an escape from many dangers and disturbances. The appetite for the beautiful in such men *must* be fed; and human beauty is a diet which leads to excessive stimulation, frequent vicissitudes of feeling at all events, and in every probability to the excitement of bitter and turbulent passions. The love and admiration of nature leads *from* all these; being in truth the safe outlet for every excess of sensibility. The pleasure so derived appears to be, of all human pleasures, the most exempt from correlative pains.

TAYLOR'S *Notes from Books.*

HAPPY is he who lives to understand,
Not human nature only, but explores
All natures—to the end that he may find
The law that governs each; and where begins
The union, the partition where, that makes
Kind and degree, among all visible beings;
The constitutions, powers, and faculties
Which they inherit—cannot step beyond,
And cannot fall beneath; that do assign
To every class its station and its office,
Through all the mighty commonwealth of things,
Up from the creeping plant to sovereign man.
Such converse, if directed by a meek,
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love:
For knowledge is delight, and such delight
Breeds love; yet suited as it rather is

To thought and to the climbing intellect,
It teaches less to love than to adore,
If that be not indeed the highest love.

WORDSWORTH.

TALKING of Delille, Lord Holland said, that notwithstanding his pretty description of Kensington Gardens, he walked with him once there, and he did not know them when he was in them. Madame de Stael never looked at anything; passed by scenery of every kind without a glance at it; which did not, however, prevent her describing it. I said that Lord Byron could not describe anything which he had not actually under his eyes, and that he did it either on the spot or immediately after. MOORE'S *Diary*.

IT is an uncharitable error to ascribe the delight with which unpoetical persons often speak of a mountain-tour to affectation. The delight is as real as mutton and beef, with which it has a closer connexion than the travellers themselves suspect, arising in great measure from the good effects of mountain air, regular exercise, and wholesome diet upon the spirits. This is sensual, indeed, though not improperly so; but it is no concession to the materialist. I do not deny that my neighbour has a soul, by referring a particular pleasure to him in the body. *Guesses at Truth.*

SURELY the stir and smoke of a town life, so far from deadening our sensibility to country beauties, render our pleasure in them of a still higher relish; at least I assure myself it is so with me: and I am no less certain that frequent retreat into the country is necessary for keeping one's mind in tone for the proper pursuits of active life, and for refreshing, in our imagination, those

larger and distant views which render such occupations most useful, and which alone make them safe.

FRANCIS HORNER.

THERE are two ways of living with nature. The one is universally known and practised. People walk among the green fields with their heads high in the air, and talk about the weather; they gather flowers, smell them, throw them away; they take their meals in the open air, often with a great deal of trouble to those who have to arrange and tire themselves to death with the necessary preparations for the *fêtes champêtres;* may go out on the water; fish, hunt, sing; look about them, enjoy themselves, yawn—do I not know? And people economise; they sow, they reap, they rear calves, shear their sheep, fatten pigs, feed chickens, bleach linen, gather berries, dry vegetables, pickle meat, make preserves, and such like. And all this is good. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* I myself have done the same. But still there is another mode of living with nature, too little known and too little practised for the happiness of mankind. And it was this in particular which now made Hedvig, as it were, begin a new life. Her spirit was, like all true Northern spirits, of an inquiring and investigating kind. She liked to seek to the origin, to the fountain-head, to the innermost of everything. And in her intercourse with nature, this desire of investigation became a source of delight to her. From this cause there was now a new and unexpected point of union between herself and Augustin, and subjects for common activity and enjoyment. They studied together the life and changes of the vegetable and insect kingdom; and every plant, every flower, every little winged or creeping creature around them must reveal to them its name, its

life, and the history of its development. To see the great in the small became to them a daily delight. The remarkable analogies which they discovered between the life of nature and human life, the little and the great, led them to a still deeper understanding of connexion between the two, and to anticipations of the great harmonies of life—those which are and those which shall be when discords cease. MISS BREMER.

I HAD been studying for a length of time with feelings of profound melancholy Holbein's picture of "The Labourer," and had strolled out into the fields, pondering on the nature of a rural life and the lot of the agriculturist. Without doubt it is a hard and ungrateful task to consume life and strength in turning up the clods of this jealous earth, which compels man to tear forcibly from its bosom its teeming treasures, when a crust of the hardest and blackest bread is, at the close of the day, the sole recompense and profit attached to so severe a toil. These riches spread over the soil, these harvests, these fruits, these noble animals fattening on the rich herbage, are the property of the few, and the instruments of fatigue and slavery to the many. The man of ease and leisure loves not in general, for their own sakes, either the fields or the plains, the broad expanse of nature, or the superb animals which are to be converted into money for his use. The man of leisure comes to seek a little fresh air and renovated health in the country, after which he returns to spend in the great cities the fruit of his vassals' toil. The labouring man, on his side, is too much oppressed, too unhappy, and too anxious for the future to enjoy the beauties of the country and the charms of rural life. For him also the golden fields, the smiling plains, the noble animals, represent sacks of crown pieces, of which

he will have but a scanty portion, almost insufficient for his needs, but which, nevertheless, he must replenish each year, in order to satisfy his master and pay for the right of living parsimoniously and miserably upon his domain. And yet nature is ever young, beautiful, and generous. She sheds poetry and beauty over all beings and upon every plant that man permits her to develop at her will. She possesses the true secret of happiness, that treasure which no one has been able to ravish from her. The happiest of beings would be that man who, possessing a scientific and cultivated mind, working with his own hands, and securing happiness and liberty from the exercise of his own intelligence and strength, would yet have leisure to devote to the improvement of his moral and intellectual qualities, to comprehend his own handiwork, and to adore that of his Maker. And the dream of an existence for the peasant, at once sweet, unfettered, poetic, laborious, and simple, is not so difficult of conception as to be peremptorily dismissed to the regions of empty speculation. That sweet but pensive ejaculation of Virgil—"Oh, happy the countryman, if he but knew his happiness!"—is a regret; but like all regrets, it is also a prediction. A day will surely come when the labourer will also be an artist, if not to express, (a matter of small moment then), at least to feel, the beautiful. But will any one assert that this mysterious and intuitive feeling of poetry is not already germinating within him in the state of instinct and vague reverie? Amongst those protected from the pressing wants of the day, and in whom the excess of poverty does not stifle all moral and intellectual development, happiness—pure, heartfelt, and deeply-appreciated happiness—is in the elementary state; and if, even amid pain, fatigue, and labour, the poet's voice has already been raised, why

should it be said that the labour of the arms is incompatible with that of the mind? This incompatibility is doubtless the general result of excessive toil and extreme poverty; but let no one say that when a man shall labour usefully and in moderation, we shall then only have bad workmen and inferior poets. He who finds elevated and lofty pleasures in the feeling of poetry is a true poet, though he had never composed a line of verse in his entire lifetime. GEORGE SAND.

SYMPATHY with nature has its own marks, stamped plainly upon all who are endowed with it, but the world is not very careful to distinguish the true marks from the false. There is no end to the spurious forms which have passed current for genuine, and it is scarcely agreeable to reflect how many of them still survive, in spite of the steady movement of the last two generations towards the true spirit and meaning of nature. The tourist who tells you that he is going to Switzerland or Italy to freshen his passion for nature, generally means by it a passion for dawdling in the sunshine with nothing on his mind. And, of course, there is no harm in such a taste. It is much more creditable than a taste for dawdling about with foolish young women, or over a wine-bottle. To be able to luxuriate in simple sunny inactivity is a quality of a healthy character. But there is nothing gained by giving a fine-sounding name to what is, after all, only useful laziness, and is wholly unfruitful of positive results upon character. If, however, nothing is gained by such a counterfeit as this, at least there is no great harm done, beyond conferring on a man a shade more of self-satisfaction than he is entitled to. This is more than can be said of another and still more prevalent imposture in the same

matter. A school of younger men has arisen—nor do they lack a consecrating bard—who persuade themselves that sympathy with nature means, and means exclusively, a fiery revelling in her sensuous delights, added to an abject grovelling before her sterner moods. What they call sympathy is, in fact, a mixture of a drunken fondness for bright colours and heavy scents, with a dismal conviction that these are only meant to befool us while we are being crushed under the feet of malignant, ruthless gods. In time, the thought of the malignity and the ruthlessness becomes as attractive to them as the joys which they frantically purvey for their senses. Among other reasons for this, is the deep consolation which reflections upon the malignity of fate bring to minds inflamed with spite and detestation against their kind. The man whose belief never goes beyond the gratification of his own senses cannot fail to despise and hate all who arrange the objects of life on wider principles. He likes to gloat over the cruelties of destiny, because, though visiting himself too, they will still curse these objects of his hatred, and repay them for the vile sin of exalting reason, instead of feasting and inflaming their senses. It pleases him to reflect that the gods are "too great to appease, too high to appal, too far to call," and he is willing to defy them for his own part, for the glee which they provide for him in the distresses laid upon his neighbours. In such cases love of nature is only another name for hatred of the human race. *Saturday Review.*

THE degree of ignorance of external nature in which men may remain, depends partly on the number and character of the subjects with which their minds may be otherwise occupied, and partly on a natural want of

sensibility to the power of beauty of form and the other attributes of external objects. I do not think that there is ever such absolute incapacity in the eye for distinguishing and receiving pleasure from certain forms and colours, as there is in persons who are technically said to have no ear for distinguishing notes; but there is naturally every degree of bluntness and acuteness, both for perceiving the truth of form, and for receiving pleasure from it when perceived. And although I believe even the lowest degree of these faculties can be expanded almost unlimitedly by cultivation, the pleasure received rewards not the labour necessary, and the pursuit is abandoned. So that while in those whose sensations are naturally acute and vivid, the call of external nature is so strong that it must be obeyed, and is ever heard louder as the approach to her is nearer,—in those whose sensations are naturally blunt, the call is overpowered at once by other thoughts, and their faculties of perception, weak originally, die of disuse. With this kind of bodily sensibility to colour and form is intimately connected that higher sensibility which we revere as one of the chief attributes of all noble minds, and as the chief spring of real poetry. I believe this kind of sensibility may be entirely resolved into the acuteness of bodily sense of which I have been speaking, associated with love—love, I mean, in its infinite and holy functions, as it embraces divine and human and brutal intelligences, and hallows the physical perception of external objects by association, gratitude, veneration, and other pure feelings of our moral nature. And although the discovery of truth is in itself altogether intellectual, and dependent merely on our powers of physical perception and abstract intellect, wholly independent of our moral nature, yet these instruments

(perception and judgment) are so sharpened and brightened, and so far more swiftly and effectively used, when they have the energy and passion of our moral nature to bring them into action—perception is so quickened by love, and judgment so tempered by veneration, that, practically, a man of deadened moral sensation is always dull in his perception of truth ; and thousands of the highest and most divine truths of nature are wholly concealed from him, however constant and indefatigable may be his intellectual search. Thus then, the farther we look, the more we are limited in the number of those to whom we should choose to appeal as judges of the truth, and the more we perceive how great a number of mankind may be partially incapacitated from either discovering or feeling it.

RUSKIN'S *Modern Painters.*

THE power which lies in the beauty of nature to induce the union of the tranquil and the vivid is described, and to every disciple of Mr Wordsworth has been as much as is possible imparted, by the celebrated "Lines written in 1798, a few miles above Tintern Abbey," in which the poet, having attributed to his intermediate recollections of the landscape then revisited a benign influence over many acts of daily life, describes thus the other particulars in which he is indebted to them :—

"Nor less I trust
To them I may have owed another gift
Of aspect more sublime : that blessed mood
In which the burthen of the mystery
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood

In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood,
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things. If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless delight, when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
Oh sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods!
How often has my spirit turned to thee!"

If it were possible to read or repeat such passages too often, we might stop here; for there are probably few portions of Mr Wordsworth's works which are better known: but they have become thus familiar because they are eminently characteristic, and for the same reason they should not be omitted from our view of Mr Wordsworth's philosophy. Having reverted to his first visit to the Wye, which was in his early youth, he proceeds:—

"Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite, a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. That time is past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss I would believe
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. . . .
. . . Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains, and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both of what they half create
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being."

This impassioned love of nature is interfused through the whole of Mr Wordsworth's system of thought, filling up all interstices, penetrating all recesses, colouring all media, supporting, associating, and giving coherency and mutual relevancy to it in all its parts. Though man is his subject, yet is man never presented to us divested of his relations with external nature. Man is the text, but there is always a running commentary of natural phenomena. In his great work, "the mind of man" is, as he announces, "the haunt and the main region of his song;" but the mind of man, as exhibited by Mr Wordsworth, whatever else it may be, hardly ever fails to be the mirror of natural objects, and more or less the creature of their power.

TAYLOR'S *Notes from Books.*



XII.

FRIENDSHIP.

FRIENDSHIP is one mind in two bodies.
ARISTOTLE.

LIFE hath no blessing like a prudent friend.
EURIPIDES.

THERE is nothing that is meritorious but virtue and friendship, and, indeed, friendship itself is but a part of virtue. POPE.

THE greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard, and excite, and elevate his virtues. DR JOHNSON.

WE may have many acquaintances, but we can have but few friends; this made Aristotle say, that he that hath many friends hath none. *Ibid.*

TRUE friendship cannot be among many. For since our faculties are of a finite energy, 'tis impossible our love can be very intense when divided among many. No, the rays must be contracted to make them burn.
JOHN NORRIS.

No pleasure certainly 'tis so divine
As when two souls in one combine.
He has the substance of all bliss
To whom a virtuous friend is given :
So sweet harmonious friendship is,
Add but eternity, you 'll make it heaven.
Ibid.

Two lutes are strung,
And on a table tuned alike for song ;
Strike one, and that which none did touch
Shall sympathising sound as much
As that which touched you see.
Think then this world, which heaven inrolls,
Is but a table round, and souls
More apprehensive be. OWEN FELTHAM.

I STRETCH forth all my roots and leaves in search of affection ; it is necessary for me to feel myself in immediate contact with it, and when I am unable to drink in full draughts of it, I at once dry up and wither. Such is my nature. There is no remedy for it, and if there were, I should not wish to employ it.

SCHLEIERMACHER.

NEEDFUL auxiliars are our friends, to give
To social man true knowledge of himself.
Full on ourselves, descending in a line,
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight :
Delight intense is taken by rebound ;
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

YOUNG.

WE have social strengths. Our affection towards others creates a sort of vantage or purchase which nothing will supply. I can do that by another which I

cannot do alone. I can say to you what I cannot first say to myself. Other men are lenses through which we read our own minds. EMERSON.

HERACLITUS saith well, in one of his enigmas, "Dry light is ever the best;" and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment, which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. There is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. LORD BACON.

ONE is not one's "genuine self"—one does not disclose all one's self—to those with whom one has no intimate sympathy. One is, therefore, several successive, and apparently different characters, according to the gradation of the faculties and the qualities of those one associates with. I am like one of those boxes I have seen enclosing several boxes of similar form, though lessening size. The person with whom I have least congeniality sees only the outermost. Another person has something more interesting in his character: he sees the next box; another sees still an inner one, but the friend of my heart, with whom I have full sympathy, sees disclosed the innermost of all.

REV. JOHN FOSTER.

NEXT to an improved and happy state of my own mind, what I most want, and here probably must not find, is a companion of originality and genius, with

whom I might expatiate on the intellectual field, and interchange sentiments which the majority of men would not understand. I should be greatly happy to be within reach of Mr Hughes. My life hitherto has been most inauspicious to the most interesting kinds of human attachment. . . . I am tolerably social, partly from inclination, and partly from a consideration of propriety; yet solitude is my paradise. *Ibid.*

OLD friends are the great blessings of one's latter years. Half a word conveys one's meaning. They have memory of the same events, and have the same mode of thinking. . . . I have young relations that may grow upon me, for my nature is affectionate, but can they grow *old* friends? My age forbids that. Still less can they grow companions. Is it friendship to explain half one says? One must relate the history of one's memory and ideas; and what is that to the young but old stories?

HORACE WALPOLE.

IN June 'tis good to lie beneath a tree,
While the blithe season comforts every sense,
Steeps all the brain in rest, and heals the heart,
Brimming it o'er with sweetness unawares,
Fragrant and silent as that rosy snow
Wherewith the pitying apple-tree fills up
And tenderly lines some last-year robin's nest.
There muse I of old times, old hopes, old friends.
Old friends! The writing of these words has borne
My fancy backward to the gracious past,
The generous past, when all was possible,
For all was then untried; the years between
Have taught some sweet, some bitter lessons, none

Wiser than this,—to spend in all things else,
But of old friends to be most miserly.
Each year to ancient friendships adds a ring,
As to an oak, and precious more and more,
Without deservingness or help of ours,
They grow, and, silent, wider spread, each year,
Their unbought ring of shelter or of shade.
Sacred to me the lichens on the bark;
Which Nature's milliners would scrape away;
Most dear and sacred every withered limb!
'Tis good to set them early, for our faith
Pines as we age, and, after wrinkles come,
Few plant, but water dead ones with vain tears.

Under the Willows, by JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

MY school friendships were with me *passions* (for I was always violent), but I do not know that there is one which has endured (to be sure some have been cut short by death) till now. That with Lord Clare began one of the earliest, and lasted longest—being only interrupted by distance—that I know of. I never hear the word "Clare" without a beating of the heart even *now*, and I write it with the feeling of 1803, 4, 5, *ad infinitum*. BYRON.

IT may safely be affirmed that generous minds, when they have once known each other, never can be alienated as long as both retain the characteristics which brought them into union. No distance of place or lapse of time can lessen the friendship of those who are thoroughly persuaded of each other's worth. There are even some broken attachments in friendship, as well as in love, which nothing can destroy, and it sometimes happens that we are not conscious of their strength till

after the disruption. There are a few persons known to me in years long past, but with whom I lived in no particular intimacy then, and have held no correspondence since, whom I could not now meet without an emotion of pleasure deep enough to partake of pain, and who, I doubt not, entertain for me feelings of the same kind and degree; whose eyes sparkle when they hear, and glisten sometimes when they speak of me, and who think of me, as I do of them, with an affection that increases as we advance in years. This is because our moral and intellectual sympathies have strengthened, and because, though far asunder, we know that we are travelling the same road towards our resting-place in heaven. "There is such a pleasure as this," says Cowper, "which would want explanation to some folks, being perhaps a mystery to those whose hearts are a mere muscle, and serve only for the purposes of an even circulation." SOUTHEY'S *Doctor*.

ON a leaf of one of his (Byron's) note-books, dated 1801, I find the following passage from Marmontel, which, no doubt, struck him as applicable to the enthusiasm of his own youthful friendships:—"L'amitie, qui dans le monde est à peine un sentiment, est une passion dans les cloîtres." MOORE.

THE most interesting description of friendship to be found probably in any author is that which Montaigne has given us in his Essays, and the description is valuable because it is drawn from Nature, and not from mere fancy. He represents himself and his friend as having become acquainted before they met, having sought each other from report alone; and the momen

they did meet they were bound for ever. Thenceforth they became, as he said, like one soul with two bodies, for all their thoughts, wishes, and even goods were in common. Their minds did not touch in one point only, but in all; and the will of the one became completely identified with that of the other. In the whole of French literature I know nothing so beautiful or so striking as this Essay. Montaigne says, in concluding—" In truth, if I compare all the rest of my life, though, by the grace of God, I have passed it sweetly, easily, and, barring the loss of such a friend, free from grievous affliction, full of tranquillity of mind, having partaken of my natural and original advantages without seeking others ; if, I say, I compare it all with the four years during which it was given to me to enjoy the sweet company and society of that person, it is but smoke—it is but a dark and tiresome night. Since the day that I lost him,

> ' Quem semper acerbum
> Semper honoratum (sic di voluistis !) habebo,'

I drag on languidly, and even the pleasures which present themselves to me, instead of consoling me, redouble my regret for his loss. We went halves in everything. I seem to rob him of his share."

RAMSAY *on Happiness and Duty.*

A FAITHFUL friend is the medicine of life ; for what cannot be effected by means of a true friend ? or what utility, what security, does he not afford ? What pleasure has friendship ? The mere beholding him diffuses an unspeakable joy, and at the bare memory of him the mind is elevated. I have known one who used to beg of holy men to pray, first for his friend and

then for him. Such is friendship, that through it we love places and seasons ; for as bright bodies emit rays to a distance, and flowers drop their sweet leaves on the ground around them, so friends impart favour even to the places where they dwell ; and when we return to these places without these friends, we weep and lament, remembering the days which we spent in their society. With friends even poverty is pleasant. Words cannot express the joy which a friend imparts ; they only can know who have experienced. A friend is dearer than the light of heaven ; for it would be better for us that the sun were extinguished, than that we should be without friends.

ST CHRYSOSTOM.

PRIESTLY speaks of "such a choice of company, as tends to keep up that right bent and firmness of mind, which a necessary intercourse with the world would otherwise warp and relax. Such fellowship is the true balsam of life ; its cement is infinitely more durable than that of the friendships of the world, and it looks for its proper fruit, and complete gratification, to the life beyond the grave." Is there a possible chance for such a one as I to realise in this world such friendships ? Where am I to look for 'em ? What testimonials shall I bring of my being worthy of such friendship ? Alas ! the great and good go together in separate herds, and leave such as I to lag far, far behind in all intellectual, and far more grievous to say, in all moral accomplishments. Coleridge, I have not one truly elevated character among my acquaintance : not one Christian : not one but undervalues Christianity—singly, what am I to do ? Wesley, (have you read his life ?), was he not an elevated character ? Wesley has

said "Religion is not a solitary thing." Alas! it necessarily is so with me, or next to solitary. 'Tis true you write to me: but correspondence by letter, and personal intimacy, are very widely different.

CHARLES LAMB *to* S. T. COLERIDGE,
January 10, 1797.

IN the matter of friendship, I have observed that disappointment arises chiefly, not from liking our friends too well, or thinking of them too highly, but rather from an over-estimate of *their* liking for and opinion of *us*, and that if we guard ourselves with sufficient scrupulousness of care from error in this direction, and can be content, and even happy to give more affection than we receive—can make just comparison of circumstances, and be severely accurate in drawing inferences, and never let self-love blind our eyes—then I think we may manage to get through life with consistency and constancy, unembittered by that misanthropy which springs from revulsion of feeling. The moral is, that if we would build on a sure foundation in friendship, we must love our friends for *their* sakes rather than for *our* own. CHARLOTTE BRONTE.

BE true to thy friend. Never speak of his faults to another, to show thy own discrimination; but open them all to him, with candour and true gentleness. Forgive all his errors and his sins, be they ever so many; but do not excuse the slightest deviation from rectitude. Never forbear to dissent from a false opinion, or a wrong practice, from mistaken motives of kindness; nor seek thus to have thy own weaknesses sustained; for these things cannot be done without injury to the soul. MRS CHILD.

I HAVE just been reading in Cicero a maxim of some worldly-minded Greek philosophers, which he finds detestable; that in friendship we should never forget that we may cease to be friends. With the noblest class of human beings this is certainly detestable, and wherever there is a warm mutual attachment. But in other cases it has really a good meaning. You ought to be cautious in your acquaintanceship how you overstep the bounds of friendly good-will, unless you are absolutely certain that your connexion will not be interrupted and broken off on one side or the other.

Life and Correspondence of NIEBUHR.

THERE are two kinds of friendship. One is the affection of the greater for the less, the other that of the less for the greater. The greater and the less may be differences of rank, or intellect, or character, or power. These are the two opposites of feeling which respectively characterise the masculine and the feminine natures, the familiar symbols of which are the oak and the ivy with its clinging tendrils. But though they are the masculine and feminine types, they are not confined to male and female. Most of us have gone through both these phases of friendship. Whoever remembers an attachment at school to a boy feebler than himself, will recollect the exulting pride of guardianship with which he shielded his friend from the oppression of some young tyrant of the playground. And whoever, at least in boyhood or youth, loved a man, to whose mental and moral qualities he looked up with young reverence, will recollect the devotion and the jealousies, and the almost passionate tenderness, and the costly gifts, and the desire of personal sacrifice, which characterise boyish friendship, and which certainly belong to

the feminine and not the masculine type of affection. Doubtless the language of "In Memoriam" is tender in the extreme,—such as a sister might use to a brother deeply beloved. But it is to be remembered that it expresses the affection of the spirit which rejoices to confess itself the feebler; and besides, that the man has passed into a spirit, and that time and distance have thrown a hallowing haze of tenderness over the lineaments of the friend of the past. It may be well also to recollect, that there is a precedent for this woman-like tenderness, against whose authority even those who would condemn the most distant approach to irreverence will scarcely venture to appeal. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been to me: thy love to me was wonderful, *passing the love of women.*" REV. F. W. ROBERTSON.

WHEN the first time of love is over, there comes a something better still. Then comes that other love; that faithful friendship which never changes, and which will accompany you with its calm light through the whole of life. It is only needful to place yourself so that it may come, and then it comes of itself. And then everything turns and changes itself to the best.

FREDERICA BREMER.

I MAINTAINED that Horace was wrong in placing happiness in *nil admirari*, for that I thought admiration one of the most agreeable of all our feelings; and I regretted that I had lost much of my disposition to admire, which people generally do as they advance in life.

Johnson. "Sir, as a man advances in life, he gets what is better than admiration,—judgment, to estimate things at their true value."

I still insisted that admiration was more pleasing than judgment, as love is more pleasing than friendship. The feeling of friendship is like that of being comfortably filled with roast beef; love like being enlivened with champagne.

Johnson. "No, sir; admiration and love are like being intoxicated with champagne; judgment and friendship like being enlivened." Waller has hit upon the same thought—

"Amoret! as sweet and good
As the most delicious food;
Which but tasted does impart
Life and gladness to the heart.

"Sacharissa's beauty's wine,
Which to madness doth incline;
Such a liquor as no brain
That is mortal can sustain."

BOSWELL'S *Johnson.*

I HAVE often contended that attachments between friends and lovers cannot be secured strong and perpetually augmenting, except by the intervention of some interest which is not *personal*, but which is common to them both, and towards which their attentions and passions are directed. If the whole attention is to be directed, and the whole sentimentalism of the heart concentrated on each other; if it is to be an unvaried, "*I towards you and you towards me*," as if each were to the other, not an ally or companion joined to pursue happiness, but the very end and object—happiness itself; if it is the *circumstance* of reciprocation itself, and not *what* is reciprocated, that is to supply perennial interest to affection; if it is to be mind still reflecting back the gaze of mind, and reflecting it again, cherub towards cherub, as on the ark, and no *luminary or glory between*

them to supply beams and warmth to both, I foresee that the hope will disappoint, the plan will fail. Affection on these terms will be reduced to the condition of a famishing animal's stomach, the opposite sides of which, for want of pabulum introduced, meet and digest and consume each other. Attachment must burn in *oxygen*, or it will go out; and, by oxygen, I mean a mutual admiration and pursuit of virtue, improvement, utility, the pleasure of taste, or some other interesting concern, which shall be the element of their commerce, and make them love each other not only *for* each other, but as devotees to some third object which they both adore. The affection of the soul will feel a dissatisfaction, and a recoil if, as they go forth, they are entirely intercepting and stopped by any object that is not *ideal;* they wish rather to be like rays of light gleaming on the side of an object, and then sloping and passing away; they wish the power of elongation through a series of interesting points on towards infinity.

Life of JOHN FOSTER.

THE confidence which new friends repose in each other, usually developes itself by degrees. Common occupation and tastes are the first things in which a mutual harmony shows itself; the mutual communication generally extends over past and present passions, especially over love affairs; but it is a lower depth which opens itself, if the connexion is to be perfected; the religious sentiments, the affairs of the heart which relate to the imperishable, are the things which both establish the foundation, and adorn the summit of a friendship.

GOETHE'S *Autobiography.*

HOW were friendship possible? In mutual devotedness to the Good and True: otherwise impossible; ex-

cept as armed neutrality or hollow commercial league. A man, be the heavens ever praised, is sufficient for himself; yet were ten men, united in love, capable of being and of doing what ten thousand singly would fail in. Infinite is the help man can yield to man. . . .

THOMAS CARLYLE.





XIII.

THE GOSPEL OF LABOUR.

THE end of man is an action, and not a thought, though it were the noblest. CARLYLE.

ACTION is the highest perfection and drawing forth of the utmost power, vigour, and activity of man's nature. SOUTH.

LEARNING is pleasurable, but doing is the height of enjoyment. NOVALIS.

I FIND that successful exertion is a powerful means of exhilaration, which discharges itself in good humour upon others. DR CHALMERS.

THOU wilt never be better pleased, than when thou hast much to do of such things as thou knowest thyself able to go through with : for business by its motion addeth heat, and a delightful vigour to the spirits ; while the unemployed, like standing waters, corrupt with their own idleness. FULLER.

I KNOW, by my own experience, that the more one works, the more willing one is to work. We are all

more or less *des animaux d'habitude.* I remember very well, that when I was in business, I wrote four or five hours together every day, more willingly than I should now half an hour; and this is most certain, that when a man has applied himself to business half the day, the other half goes off the more cheerfully and agreeably. This I found so forcibly, when I was at the Hague, that I never tasted company so well, nor was so good company myself, as at the suppers of my past days.

LORD CHESTERFIELD.

O MORTAL man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date.
And certes, there is for it reason great;
For though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that would come a heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence.*

THERE is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, mean, *is* in communication with Nature; the real desire to get work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, Nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth.

Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-

deepening river there, it runs and flows;—draining off the sour festering water, gradually from the root of the remotest grass blade; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow with its clear-flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and *its* value be great or small! Labour is life: from the inmost heart of the worker rises his God-given force, the sacred celestial life-essence breathed into him by Almighty God; from his inmost heart awakens him to all nobleness, to all knowledge, "self-knowledge, and much else so soon as work fitly begins.

All true work is sacred; in all true work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness. Labour, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven. Sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat of the brain; sweat of the heart, which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all sciences, all spoken epics, all acted heroisms, martyrdoms,— up to that "Agony of bloody sweat," which all men have called divine! O brother, if this is not "worship," then I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow-workmen there, in God's Eternity; surviving there. They alone surviving: sacred band of the immortals, celestial body guard of the empire of mankind. Even in the weak human memory they survive so long, as saints, as heroes, as gods; they alone surviving; peopling, they alone the unmeasured solitudes of Time! To them heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; heaven is kind,—as a noble mother; as that Spartan mother, saying while she gave her son his child, "With it my son, or upon it!" Thou, too, shalt return *home* in

honour; to thy far-distant home, in honour; doubt it not,—if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou in the eternities and deepest death-kingdoms art not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen! Complain not; the very Spartans did not *complain*.

Past and Present, by T. CARLYLE, 1843.

AND who art thou that braggest of thy life of idleness; complacently showest thy bright gilt equipages; sumptuous cushions; appliances for folding of the hands to mere sleep? Looking up, looking down, around, behind, or before, discernest thou, if it be not in Mayfair alone, any *idle* hero, saint, god, or even devil? Not a vestige of one. In the heavens, in the earth, in the waters under the earth, is none like unto thee. Thou art an original figure in this creation; a denizen in Mayfair alone, in this extraordinary century or half-century alone! One monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his "religion?" That Nature is a phantasm, where cunning beggary or thievery may sometimes find good victual. That God is a lie; and that man and his life are a lie. Alas, alas, who of us *is* there that can say, I have worked? The faithfullest of us are unprofitable servants; the faithfullest of us know that best. The faithfullest of us may say, with sad and true old Samuel, "Much of my life has been trifled away!" *Ibid.*

WHAT are we set on earth for? Say, to toil—
Nor seek to leave thy tending of the vines,
For all the heat o' the day, till it declines,
And Death's mild curfew shall from work assoil.
God did anoint thee with His odorous oil,

To wrestle, not to reign; and He assigns
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,
For younger fellow-workers of the soil
To wear for amulets. So others shall
Take patience, labour, to their heart and hands,
From thy hands, and thy heart, and thy brave cheer,
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.
The least flower, with a brimming cup, may stand,
And share its dew-drop with another near.

ELIZABETH BARRET BROWNING.

THE woman singeth at her spinning-wheel
A pleasant chant, ballad or barcarolle;
She thinketh of her song upon the whole,
Far more than of her flax; and yet the reel
Is full, and artfully her fingers feel
With quick adjustment, provident control,
The lines, too subtly twisted to unroll,
Out to a perfect thread. I hence appeal
To the dear Christian Church—that we may do
Our Father's business in these temples mirk,
Thus, swift and steadfast; thus, intent and strong;
While, thus, apart from toil, our souls pursue
Some high calm spheric tune, and prove our work
The better for the sweetness of our song.

Ibid.





XIV.

TOO MUCH BRAIN-WORK.

WE wonder to what extent death from over brain-work increases. The returns do not show it, but people who live in great cities hear of it with increasing frequency. It is worth recording that, in the opinion of a very great physician, the true remedy for the sleeplessness, which is the most distressing symptom of overwork, is not opium, but Bass's beer, drunk at bed-time, instead of dinner.

Spectator.

WHAT is most wanting to arduous enterprises, in the present day, is—time ; we can scarcely command a few hours of undisturbed or effectual activity. We live in the midst of tempests or dead calms, condemned alternately to shipwreck or inaction. More rapid and controlling than ourselves, events carry away our ideas and intentions before they have passed into facts, and not unfrequently before they have even ripened into attempts. *Guizot.*

WE think and we exhaust; we scheme, imagine, study, worry, and enjoy, and proportionately we waste.

Over-worked brains and stomachs, under-worked muscles and limbs, soon derange the balance of supply and demand. We waste faster than enfeebled digestion can well repair. We feel always a little depressed; we restore the equilibrium temporarily by stimulation—some with coffee and tea, others with tobacco. How much resort to the more powerful and fascinating narcotics these innocent stimulants prevent, we can only judge by the weakness of human nature and the vast consumption. *North American Review.*

EVERY one is so busy in these days; in spite of Solomon's saying, that there is "a time for all things," our modern men can hardly find a time for anything. It is not only the unfortunate mechanic that is driven into a state of slavery by his fourteen hours of daily toil, and has a holiday so rarely that he does not know how to use it when it comes, but even what they in their ignorance would call the unproductive classes, have not, if you will believe their own pitiable story, a moment to themselves. They are so busy always. In the name of the great Busybody ["Sabbathless Satan," as Charles Lamb quaintly designates him]—busy about what?

> "Seven hours to sleep, to healthful labour seven,
> Ten to the world allow, and all to Heaven."

Now the man to whom this distich is attributed is generally allowed to have brought something to pass in his generation. But I suppose the days have grown shorter since then. BLACKWOOD'S *Magazine.*

THE business of the House of Commons is conducted by a few persons, but these are hard-worked. Sir Robert Peel knew the blue-books by heart. His col-

leagues and rivals carry *Hansard* in their heads. The high civil and legal offices are not beds of ease, but posts which exact frightful amounts of mental labour. Many of the great labourers—like Pitt, Canning, Castlereagh, Romilly—are soon worked to death.

EMERSON'S *English Traits*, 1849.

THE excessive application of Mr Poulett Thomson to public business during the session of 1832 materially affected his health. Attendance on some committees in the morning, his office [the Board of Trade], and the night passed in the House, often till two or three in the morning, were more than any constitution could bear, any energy successfully contend with. His journal, which from about this period was kept with tolerable regularity, contains occasionally such entries as the following :—"*August* 28, *Saturday.*—A week of the hardest possible labour. I have not returned from the House any day till three ; on Wednesday not till four. It is impossible to stand this ! I find my body quite exhausted, and my mind equally worn out. All this week I have alternated between the Bank and Silk Committees, and then the House. On Wednesday I carried my bill [the Customs Duties] through the committee ; was at it from five till two in the morning, nine mortal hours ! . . . I passed my bill to-day, thank God ! " *Life of* LORD SYDENHAM.

[LORD SYDENHAM'S life was certainly cut short by too much brain-work, and, since his death, many other statesmen have succumbed at an early age under the same tremendous pressure. Sir Robert Peel, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, Lord Herbert of Lea, the Duke of Newcastle, and Sir William Molesworth are notable instances of what we refer to. It is well to note, how-

ever, as the *North American Review* points out, in the following passage, that mere change of mental occupation has the same effect upon some men as excessive application has upon others. Want of official training in early life also causes hard work to press much heavier upon men who enter public life after middle age than upon those who have been in harness from youth upward.]

MEN sometimes leave their accustomed occupations, which require comparatively little mental exertion, or to which capacity, education, and long habit had adapted them, and engage in others which require much more thought and study. Although most persons may do this safely, yet the change is not without danger. When farmers leave their lands and become traders, when country traders on a small scale become city merchants on a large scale, when regular merchants become speculators, when any one goes out of an old and tried sphere of business and enters a new and untried one which involves greater responsibility, he increases the pressure upon his brain; and unless he has a well-disciplined mind, and is accustomed to severe labours, he incurs some risk of over-working and impairing his cerebral structure.

This is especially the case with those who suddenly change their life from one of quiet ease and irresponsibleness to one of great excitement, labour, and duty. Some, unused to mental toil, float carelessly along the smooth stream of time, until, by a sudden turn of fortune or circumstance, they are placed in laborious positions or elevated to important offices, where the weight and care of business, and the necessity of producing results beyond their former experience and

endeavours, press too heavily upon their powers of endurance. Sooner or later, they are found inadequate to the charge they have assumed, and unable to sustain themselves in their new relation without suffering. They expend more cerebral force than the brain can spare without wearing upon its strength; they overdraw upon their vital capital: some break down in health, and some sink in death.

Charles Fox for many years aimed at the Premiership of Great Britain. He was an active man in Parliament, but was not accustomed to assume great responsibilities, or to bear heavy burdens on his brain long and continuously. He had not exact and laborious habits of mind; and when he attained the object of his ambition, and was placed in the highest office, he found that it required a degree of mental discipline and a continuity of intense mental labour to which he had not been used, and which he could not sustain. In a short time he sank beneath the load, which overtasked his cerebral forces and overstrained his powers.

North American Review, 1859.

Till within even the last eighteen months, or two years, if you had gone down one morning, at half-past nine, to Westminster, you might have heard him [Sir William Follett] opening with masterly ease, clearness, and skill, a patent case, or some other important matter, before a special jury; and immediately after resuming his seat, you would see him go, perhaps, into the adjoining court of *nisi prius*, in which also he was engaged as leading counsel, and where he would quickly ascertain the exact position of the case, and effectively cross-examine or re-examine a witness, or object to or support the admissibility of evidence; then, if you followed his

footsteps, you would find him in the Lord Chancellor's court, engaged in some equity case of great magnitude and difficulty. Some time afterwards he might be seen hastening to the Privy Council, and by about two or three o'clock at the bar of the House of Lords, in the midst of an admirable reply to some great appeal or peerage case. When the House broke up, Sir William Follett would doff the full-bottomed wig in which alone Queen's counsel are allowed to appear before the House of Lords, and resuming his short wig, re-appear in either —or by turns in both—the courts of *nisi prius*, where he had left trials pending, having directed himself to be sent for if there should arise any necessity for it. Then he would in a very few moments calmly possess himself of the exact state of the cause, and resume his personal conduct of it as effectively as if he had never quitted the court. If he could be spared for a quarter of an hour, he would glide out, followed by one or two counsel and attorneys, to hold one, or perhaps two, consultations in cases fixed for the next day. On the Court's rising—perhaps about six or seven o'clock—he would go home to swallow a hasty dinner; then hold one, two, or even three consultations at his own house; read over, as none but he could read, some briefs, and about eleven or twelve o'clock make his appearance in the House of Commons, and, perhaps, take a leading part in some very critical debate—listened to with uninterrupted silence, and with the admiration of both friends and foes. The above, with the exception of taking part in the debate of the House of Commons, was an average day's work of the late Sir William Follett. And was it not the life of a galley-slave chained to the oar?

BLACKWOOD'S *Magazine*, 1846.

A BOSTONIAN, who had returned from a tour in England and Ireland, much struck with the poverty of the lower classes, and with the difficulties experienced by those who are struggling to rise in the world, remarked to me, "We ought to *be* happier than the English, although we do not *look* so." There is, in fact, a careworn expression in the countenances of the New Englanders, which arises partly from their striving and anxious disposition, and their habits of hard work, mental and bodily, and partly from the effects of the climate. One of their lawyers expressed to me his regret that the members of his profession, and their most eminent politicians, physicians, and literary men, would not spare themselves, and give up some time to relaxation. "They seem determined," he said, "to realise the sentiment so finely expressed by Milton—

'To scorn delights, and live laborious days.'

Our ancestors had to work fifteen hours out of every twenty-four, in order not to starve in the wilderness; but we persist in straining every nerve when that necessity has ceased." He then reminded me how much more cheerful, plump, and merry the young negro children looked in the South than those of New England, who had all the appearance of having been forced in their education, and over-crammed at school.

LYELL'S *Second Visit to the United States*, 1845, 6.

SOME say the Americans have no physiognomy—a great mistake, I think. To me their physiognomy seems most strongly marked, bearing deep impress of that intensity which is the essence of their being. The features even of the young are furrowed with lines of anxious thought and determined will. You read upon the nation's brow the extent of its enterprise, and the inten-

sity of its desires. Every American looks as if his eyes were glaring into the Far West and the far future. Nay, his mental physiognomy is determined by the same earnestness of purpose. The American never plays, nor even the American child. He cares nothing for those games and sports which are the delight of the Englishman. He is indifferent to the play either of mind or muscle. Labour is his element, and his only relaxation from hard work is fierce excitement. Neither does he laugh. The Americans, I imagine, are the most serious people in the world. There is no play even in their fancy. French wit is the sparkle of the diamond, that dazzles a *salon;* the American imagination flashes its sheet-lightning over half a world.

The same terrible earnestness is, I am persuaded, at the bottom of that ill-health which is so serious a curse to American life. No doubt other things contribute—climate, stimulants, sedentary occupations, and so forth; but the deepest-rooted cause of American disease is that overworking of the brain, and over-excitement of the nervous system, which are the necessary consequences of their intense activity. Hence nervous dyspepsia, with consumption, insanity, and all its brood of fell disorders in its train. In a word, the American works himself to death.

Letters from the Slave States,
by JAMES STIRLING, 1857.

IN the cities and more densely-populated portions of New England and the Middle States, at least, insanity is increasing, and this increase is in a greater ratio than that of the population. After making liberal allowances for the errors of the census, it appears that in no section of the world is insanity more prevalent than in this

We may undoubtedly trace this startling effect to the general restlessness and excitement that pervades the community, and the general indifference to the most common and essential physiological laws. As a community we have too little recreation—too little regard for the refreshing and invigorating influences of social intercourse: and far too little time is given to the enjoyment of literary and scientific pursuits. Our devotion to business of every kind is too long continued and too absorbing. We rise early and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, and eat it hastily, that we may carry out those plans of advancement which are so engrossing. The deep traces of care and anxious thought are written on the brow, and their corroding influences consume not only the elasticity of our frame, but in too many instances, it is to be feared, the better feelings of the heart. These influences pervade society in this country more than any other on the globe. They draw within their vortex many who would gladly escape them, and, increasing with the flood-tide of national prosperity, threaten to engulph the better feelings and sympathies of the nation, in the maelstrom of ambition and gain. Remonstrating one day with an intelligent young merchant on the folly and danger of devoting himself so exclusively to his business, to the neglect of exercise and the enjoyments of the family circle, he confessed that it was wrong, but pleaded that the eager competition that existed around him required the devotion of all his time and energies to sustain his character as a business man. "I never allow myself more than five minutes to a meal," said another, who in one month was a raving maniac.

Twenty-second Annual Report of the Retreat for the Insane at Hartford, Connecticut.

WHEN I asked the physician of the Ohio Lunatic Asylum, a magnificent establishment, which class of society furnished the majority of lunatics, he answered, to my astonishment, the farmers; they work too hard, and have no holidays. Rest, here in the asylum, restores them always. I had thought that the gambling population of the cities, with their sudden fortunes and reverses, were nearer to the brink of mental alienation than the agriculturists, with their regular and steady pursuits. But the remark of the physician is certainly profound. Sunday is here a day of prayers exclusively, not likewise of relaxation and enjoyment, and the Anglo-Saxon race has forgotten how to amuse itself with trifles. You find the Merry Old England now only in poetry; since the time of Cromwell and his Puritans the people have a gloomy cast, and the business habits of our age have destroyed the olden gay character of the race. A sprightly Englishman or American is an exception. The dance under the May-pole, social music, and the deep feeling for the beauties of nature, so profoundly rooted in the German mind, are unknown to the American farmer. He toils hard, and he does not know contentment—he always longs for more. Give to a Hungarian or a German a moderate income, just enough to maintain the family, a blue sky, a green meadow, a shady tree in summer; a comfortable stove, a song and a chat in winter, and he does not care for all the riches in the world. The American restlessness is therefore tedious to the German immigrants, and especially their wives rarely feel comfortable in this steeplechase for fortune. A German lady, who visited me here, told me how her husband had come over with a handsome capital from Germany; how they lost it in a paper manufactory, and how they retrieved their property,

first by keeping a school, and then by buying land, which since had risen above all their expectation. "Every German loses his money here," she said, "who enters into speculation; he is not sharp enough for the Americans. But every one of us prospers who buys land, and works hard. But yet," continued she, "I hope not to die here; I long for the quiet, hearty life of Germany. Were it not oppressed by despots, and stripped of all freedom, we should have long ago returned. A poor man there has more enjoyment than the rich here; nothing but the freedom of America makes life here supportable. Were Germany politically free, not one of us would cross the ocean to live among this joyless people." PULSZKY'S *Sketches of Society in the United States*, 1853.





XV.

THE GOSPEL OF REST.

LEISURE for men of business, and business for men of leisure, would cure many complaints.

MRS THRALE.

WE sometimes feel as if we should like to run our heads into a hole, to be quiet for a little time from the stir of so many human beings, which greets us from morning to evening. DR ARNOLD.

I PANT beyond expression for two days of absolute and unbroken leisure. If it were not for my love of beautiful nature and poetry, my heart would have died within me long ago. LORD JEFFREY.

IT is a favourite speculation of mine that, if spared to sixty, we then enter on the seventh decade of human life, and that it, if possible, should be turned into the Sabbath of our earthly pilgrimage and spent sabbatically, as if on the shore of an eternal world, or in the outer courts, as it were, of the temple that is above—the tabernacle in heaven. What enamours me all the

more of this idea is the retrospect of my mother's widowhood. I long, if God should spare me, for such an old age as she enjoyed—spent as if at the gate of heaven, and with such a fund of inward peace and hope as made her nine years' widowhood a perfect feast and foretaste of the blessedness that awaits the righteous. DR CHALMERS.

[ON the 17th March 1845, Dr Chalmers made the following entry in his journal :—"My birthday ; I have got over the half of my seventh decade, being now sixty-five, and have entered on what I call the Sabbath afternoon. My God, may it have a more sabbatical character than my Sabbath forenoon has had. I would henceforth live wholly unto Thee." His wish for that Sabbath of perfect rest which he yearned for at an earlier period was not to be his lot. He died in harness in 1847.]

I COVET rest neither for my friends nor yet for myself, so long as we are able to work ; but when age or weakness comes on, and hard labour becomes an unendurable burden, then the necessity of work is deeply painful, and it seems to imply an evil state of society wherever such a necessity generally exists. One's age should be tranquil, as one's childhood should be playful; hard work, at either extremity of human existence, seems to me out of place. The morning and the evening should be alike cool and peaceful; at midday the sun may burn, and men may labour under it.

DR ARNOLD, 1836.

NO doubt that work is a luxury, and a very great one. It is indeed a luxury and a necessity ; no man can retain either health of mind or body without it.

So profoundly do I feel this, that one of the principal objects I would recommend to benevolent and practical persons, is to induce rich people to seek for a larger quantity of this luxury than they at present possess. Nevertheless, it appears by experience that even this healthiest of pleasures may be indulged in to excess, and that human beings are just as liable to surfeit of labour as to surfeit of meat; so that as, on the one hand, it may be charitable to provide, for some people, lighter dinner and more work,—for others, it may be equally expedient to provide lighter work and more dinner. RUSKIN.

I AM retired to Monticello, where, in the bosom of my family, and surrounded by my books, I enjoy a repose to which I have long been a stranger. My mornings are devoted to correspondence. From breakfast to dinner, I am in my shops, my garden, or on horseback among my farms; from dinner to dark, I give to society and recreation with my neighbours and friends; and from candlelight to early bedtime, I read. My health is perfect, and my strength considerably reinforced by the activity of the course I pursue—perhaps it is as great as usually falls to the lot of nearly sixty-seven years of age. I talk of ploughs and harrows, seeding and harvesting, with my neighbours, and of politics too, if they choose, with as little reserve as the rest of my fellow-citizens, and feel, at length, the blessing of being free to say and do what I please without being responsible for it to any mortal. A part of my occupation, and by no means the least pleasing, is the direction of the studies of such young men as ask it. They place themselves in the neighbouring village, and have the use of my library and counsel; and make a

part of my society. In advising the course of their reading, I endeavour to keep their attention fixed on the main object of all science—the freedom and happiness of man; so that, coming to bear a share in the councils and government of their country, they will ever keep in view the sole objects of all legitimate government. JEFFERSON'S *Correspondence*, *Letter to Kosciusko*, 1810.

AND may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star the heaven doth show,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
Il Penseroso.

THE wish to possess a country-house, a retreat, a nest, a harbour of some kind, from the storms, and even from the agitating pleasures of life, is as old as the sorrows and joys of civilisation. The child feels it when he "plays at house;" the school-boy when he is reading in his corner; the lover when he thinks of his mistress. Epicurus felt it in his garden; Horace and Virgil expressed their desire of it in passages which the sympathy of mankind has rendered immortal. It was the end of all the wisdom and experience of Shakespeare. He retired to his native town, and built himself a house, in which he died. LEIGH HUNT.

THE successful barrister, at the summit of his profession and the height of fame, is so overwhelmed with business that he has time neither for sleep, nor society,

nor recreation, nor literature; his strength is overtaxed, his life is slipping away, he has not even leisure for the sweet amenities of the domestic circle; he is amassing thousands which he does not want and cannot spend; he is engrossing briefs which poor men thirst for in vain; yet when does he ever resign a portion of his business to hungry competitors? When does he ever resolve upon "shorter hours," less toil, and less emolument? When does he ever say to himself, "I will no longer spend my labour for that which is not bread, and for the food which satisfieth not: I will pause, I will rest, I will enjoy, I will contemplate, I will consecrate my remaining years to my family, to my country, to my soul?" *North British Review.*

Our poor friend Robinson has made one fortune, but did not consider it large enough, and is now busy making another. He is off to the city at eight A.M., never returning till eight P.M., and then so worn and jaded that he cares for nothing beyond his dinner and his sleep. His beautiful house, his conservatories and pleasure-grounds delight not him; he never enjoys, he only pays for them. He has a charming wife and a youthful family, but he sees little of either—the latter, indeed, he never sees at all except on Sundays. He comes home so tired that the children would only worry him. To them "papa" is almost a stranger. They know him only as a periodical encumbrance on the household life, which generally makes it much less pleasant. And when they grow up, it is to such a totally different existence than his, that they usually quietly ignore him. "Oh! papa cares nothing about this. No, no; we never think of telling papa anything." Until some day papa will die, and leave them a

quarter of a million. But how much better to leave them what no money can ever buy—the remembrance of a *father!* A real father, whose guardianship made home safe; whose tenderness filled it with happiness; who was companion and friend as well as ruler and guide; whose influence interpenetrated every day of their lives, every feeling of their hearts; who was not merely the "author of their being"—that is nothing, a mere accident; but the originator and educator of everything good in them; the visible father on earth, who made them understand dimly, "our Father, which is in heaven." FRASER'S *Magazine*, 1866.

WE are confident that the origin of much of the nervousness and impaired health of individuals who are not decidedly sick, is owing to the want of a sufficient and quiet rest. To procure this it is important, in the first place, that the mind should not be disturbed for several hours before retiring to rest. Secondly, Retire early, and when neither very warm nor cold; sleep on a hair mattress, or on a bed not very soft. The bedroom should be large and well ventilated, and the bed should not be placed near the wall, or near a window, as such an arrangement often exposes the person to currents of cold air. Thirdly, That there should be nothing tight about the neck; and the Chinese rule of brushing the teeth before retiring is a good one. Tea or coffee taken late in the evening is apt to disturb sleep. Strive to banish thought as much as possible, or take up but the most dull subject. Study during the evening is improper. Some few persons, we know, are able to perform much mental labour, and to study late at night, and yet sleep well. Some require but little sleep. But such individuals are very rare. General Pichegru in-

formed Sir Gilbert Blane that during a whole year's campaign he did not sleep more than one hour in twenty-four. Sleep seemed to be at the command of Napoleon, as he could sleep and wake apparently at his will. M. Guizot is a good sleeper. At the time he was Minister of France he was thus described by a late writer :—" His facility for going to sleep, after extreme excitement and mental exertion, is prodigious ; and it is fortunate for him he is so constituted, otherwise his health would materially suffer. A Minister in France ought not to be a nervous man ; it is fatal to him if he is. After the most boisterous and tumultuous sittings at the Chamber, after being *baited* by the Opposition in the most savage manner—there is no milder expression for their excessive violence—he arrives at home, throws himself upon a couch, and sinks immediately into a profound sleep, from which he is undisturbed till midnight, when proofs of the *Moniteur* are brought to him for inspection." *American Journal of Insanity.*

If you are to work well, you must sleep well. If you are to keep your health and strength and youth—to carry your powers of work with you to the last—you must sedulously pay court to your pillow. It will commonly be found that the men who carry their years lightly are men who possess the faculty of sleeping at will. If you have much work to do, you must not account time spent in sleep to be time lost. It is time gained. It is an essential part of the duty of the day. I had once an old servant who used to say, " Well, I have done my work. I have cleaned up, and now *I'll get my sleeping done.*" Sleeping was, in her philosophy, a thing to be done—not a passive state, but an active part of her duty. And every workman should so con-

sider it. Let him sleep in his bed, if he can, at proper hours of the night; if not, let him sleep at any odd time, when nature invites him to rest himself. If we do not play tricks with ourselves, if we work hard without overworking ourselves, sleep will rarely be coy to us. As a general rule, it may be said that busy men are better sleepers than idlers, and that mental labour contributes more to sound sleep than bodily fatigue. I believe that only mere novices in work are kept awake by the thought of it. Experienced workmen acquire a habit of shaking off its environments when they will. If there be one thing in life for which I am profoundly thankful to the Giver of all good gifts, it is for the faculty of sleep.

"I have two friends, who are with me night and day,—
True friends and constant, ever by my side;
Than mother more devoted, or young bride:
Yet when one comes, the other steals away;
For jealous friends will no joint vigil keep:—
The one's great name is WORK; the other's SLEEP."

Cornhill Magazine, 1860.

